Until Death do us Part

12

Story: Hiroshi Takashige

Art: DOUBLE-S

Until
do
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Art: DOUBLE-S

Until Death do us Part

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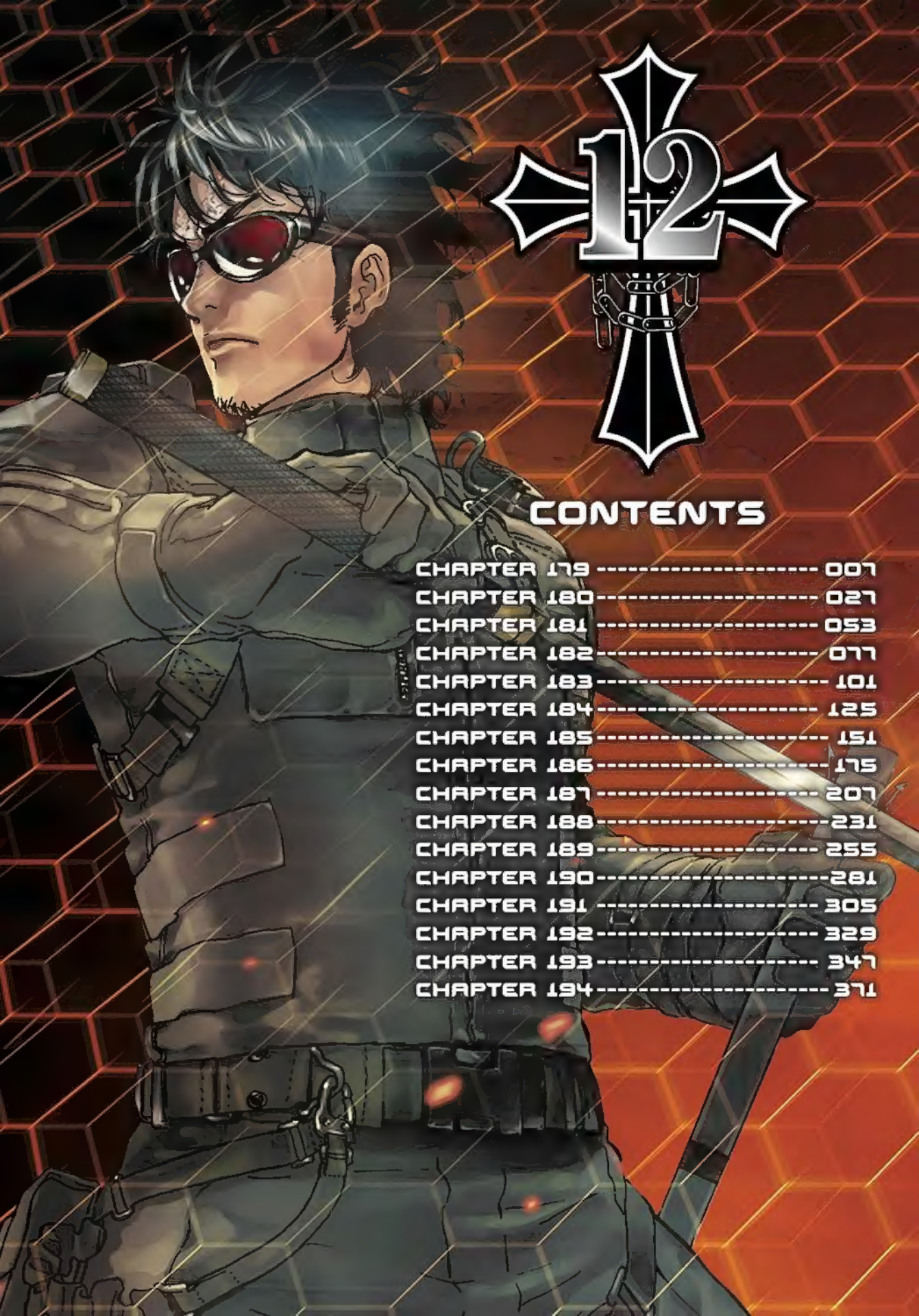
do us Part



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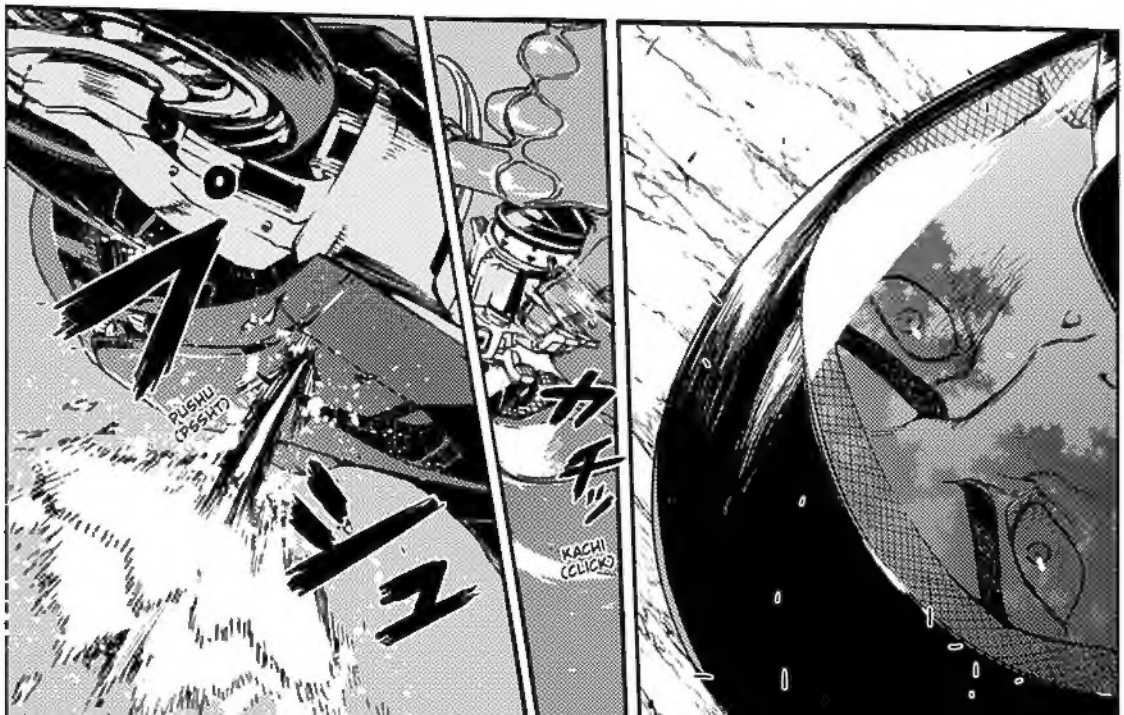
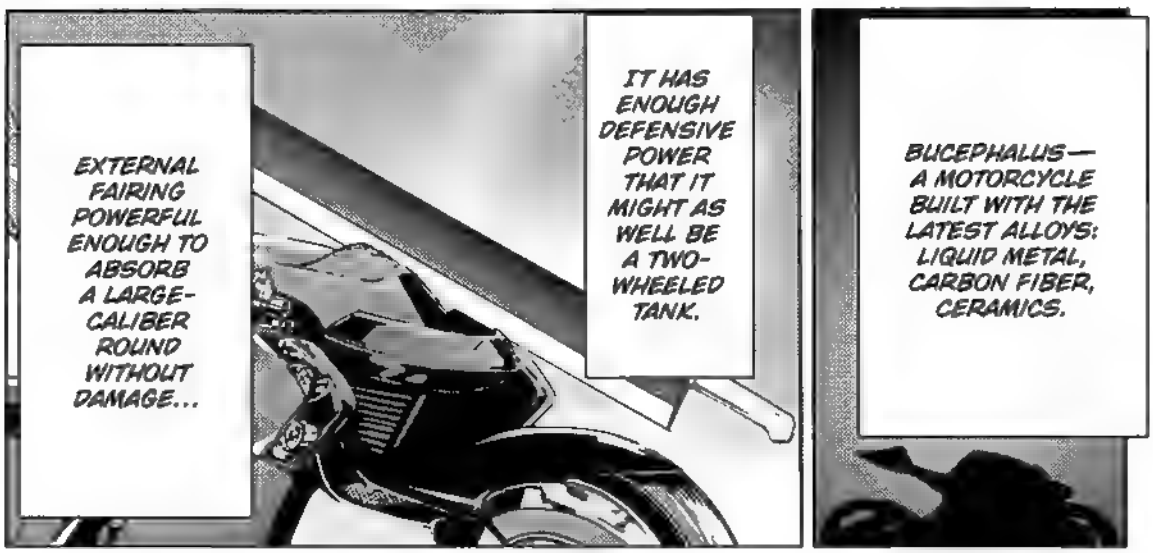

PUSHU (PSSHT)
KACHI (CLICK)

PUSHU
PUSHU
PUSHU (PSSHT)
...
DOSUN (THWUMP)

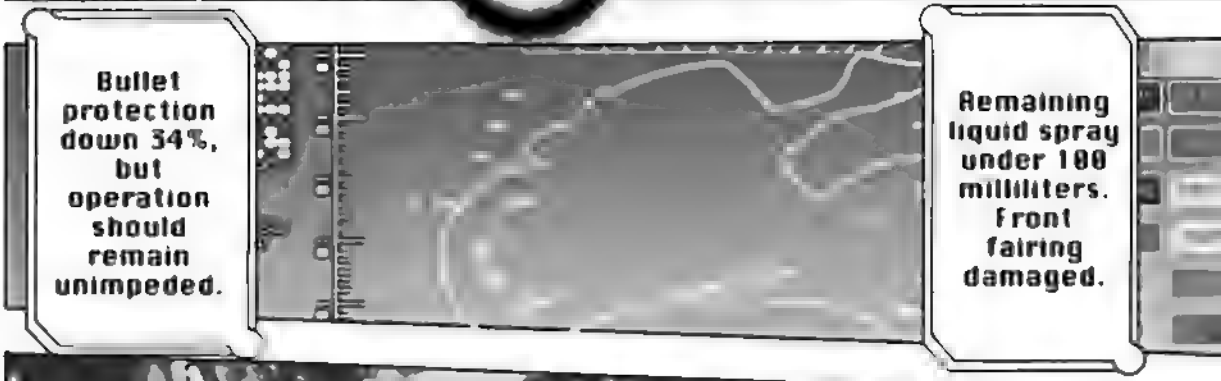
GYURU
(SHWIV)
ZUGA
(SMAK)

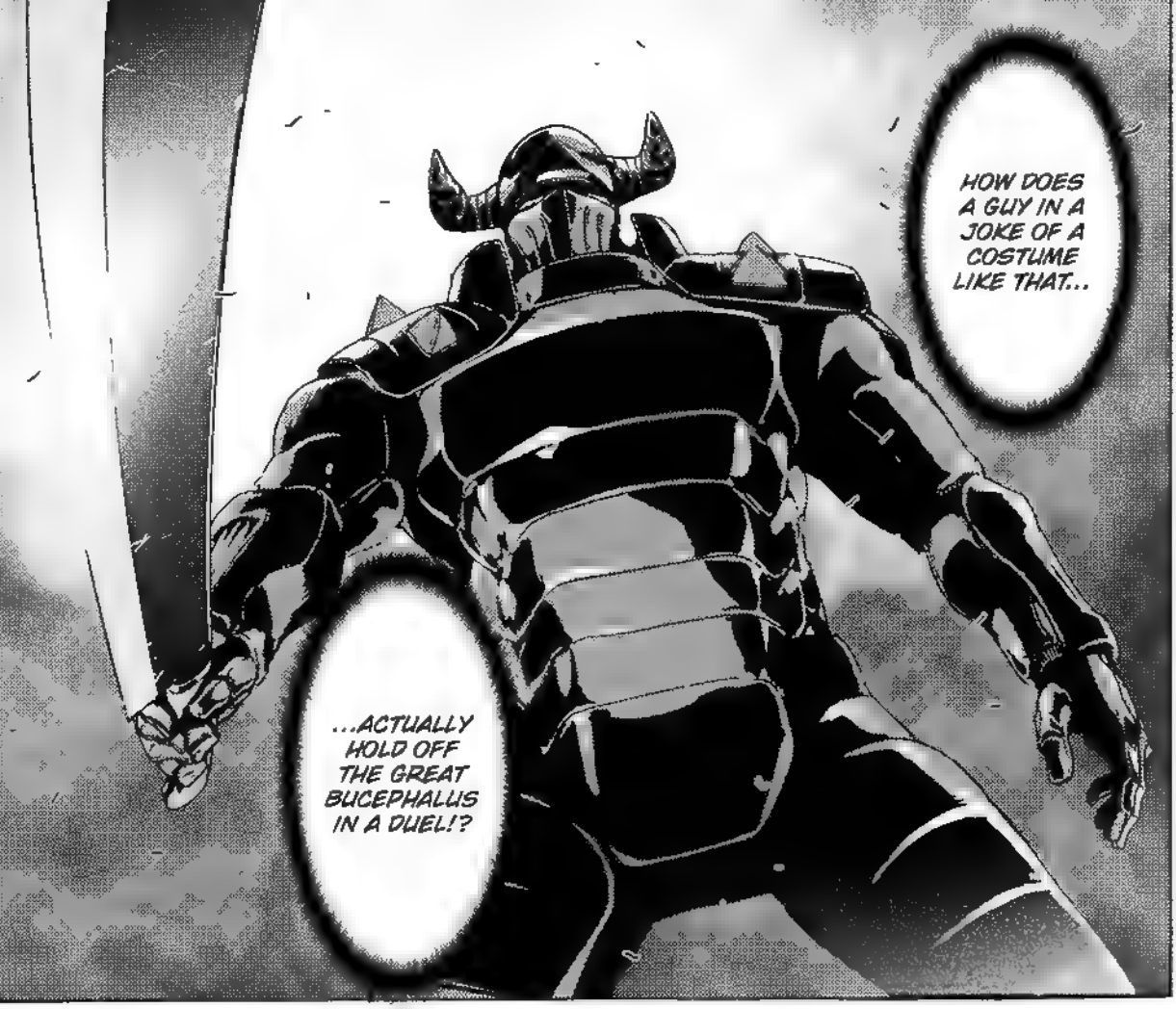
ZUIA (ISSHK)
ZA
ZA
ZUN (ZHHC)


EXTERNAL FAIRING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO ABSORB A LARGE-CALIBER ROUND WITHOUT DAMAGE...
IT HAS ENOUGH DEFENSIVE POWER THAT IT MIGHT AS WELL BE A TWO-WHEELED TANK.
BUCEPHALUS— A MOTORCYCLE BUILT WITH THE LATEST ALLOYS: LIQUID METAL, CARBON FIBER, CERAMICS.

AND YOU JUST TORE THROUGH IT LIKE BUTTER.
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY MOVE LIKE THAT!!
SHUT IT, MON-STER!
GAAAA (YAAAAO)
I'LL HAVE YOU CRYING IN NO TIME!!
KA (SNAG)

DAMN! HE FORCED ME TO USE MY SECRET WEAPON WITHOUT MEANING TO!


Bullet protection down 34%, but operation should remain unimpeded.
Remaining liquid spray under 100 milliliters. Front fairing damaged.


HOW DOES A GUY IN A JOKE OF A COSTUME LIKE THAT...
...ACTUALLY HOLD OFF THE GREAT BUCEPHALUS IN A DUEL!?

KICHICHICH (KRRR)

7"
GRG
N-NO, DON'T!
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH.

... HNG ...
...
ギロッ
GIRO (GULARES)
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, BUT NOW'S THE TIME TO HOLD IT IN.
THE YOUNG LADY'S TEAM IS FIGHTING FOR YOU WITH THE UNDER-STANDING THAT YOU WILL NOT KILL.
BREAK THAT VOW, AND YOU'LL LOSE AN ARM OR TWO.
TO PROTECT THE YOUNG MISS'S HEART, I WILL BE A DEMON IF I MUST.

VERY GOOD, GENTLE-MEN.

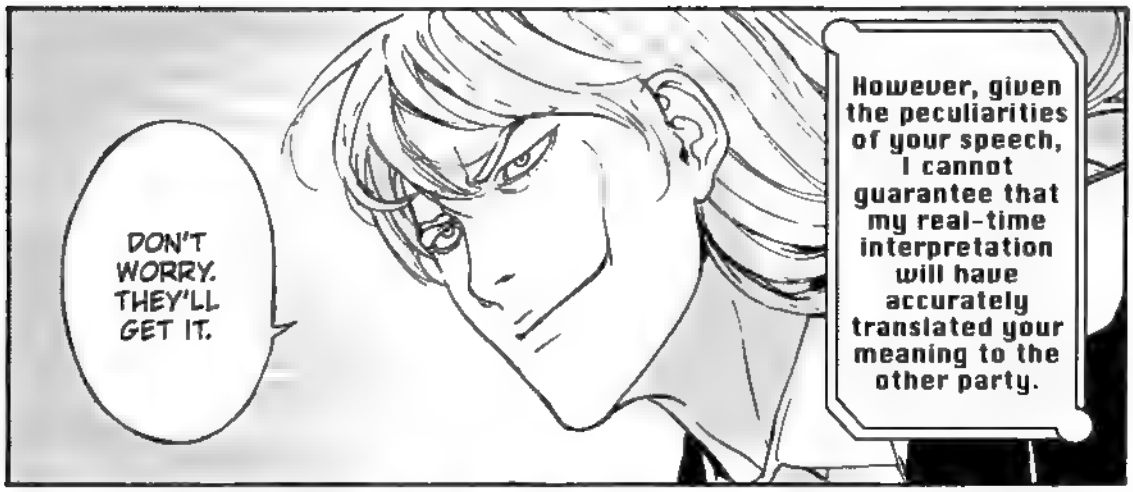
...

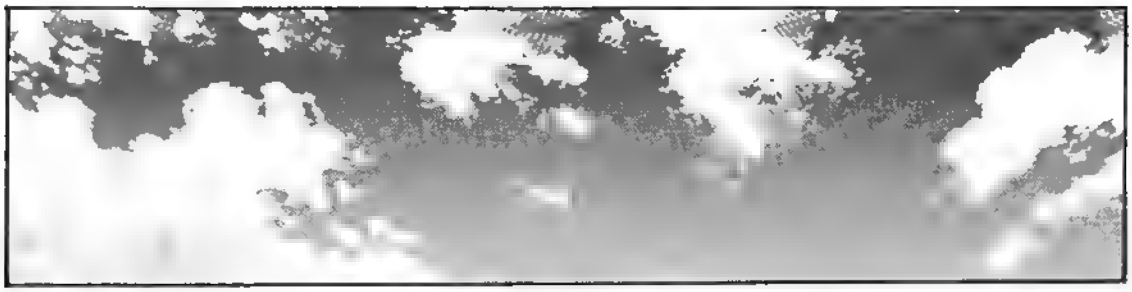
TATA (TEP)
AND NOW I'LL BE OFF!

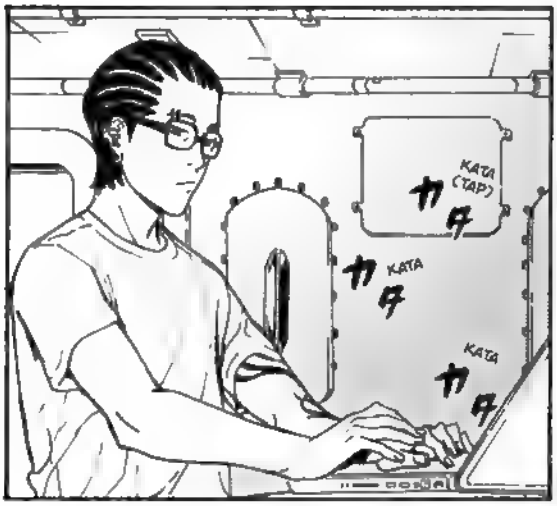
LET'S KEEP IT ALL ABOVE-BOARD.

SEND THE LITTLE LADY A REPORT, SPARKY, OR WHATEVER YOUR NAME IS.
Under-stood, sir.

IS HE A NINJA?
NO, I HEARD HE'S WHAT THEY CALL A "YAKUZA."


However, given the peculiarities of your speech, I cannot guarantee that my real-time interpretation will have accurately translated your meaning to the other party.
DON'T WORRY. THEY'LL GET IT.




KATA (TAP)
KATA
KATA

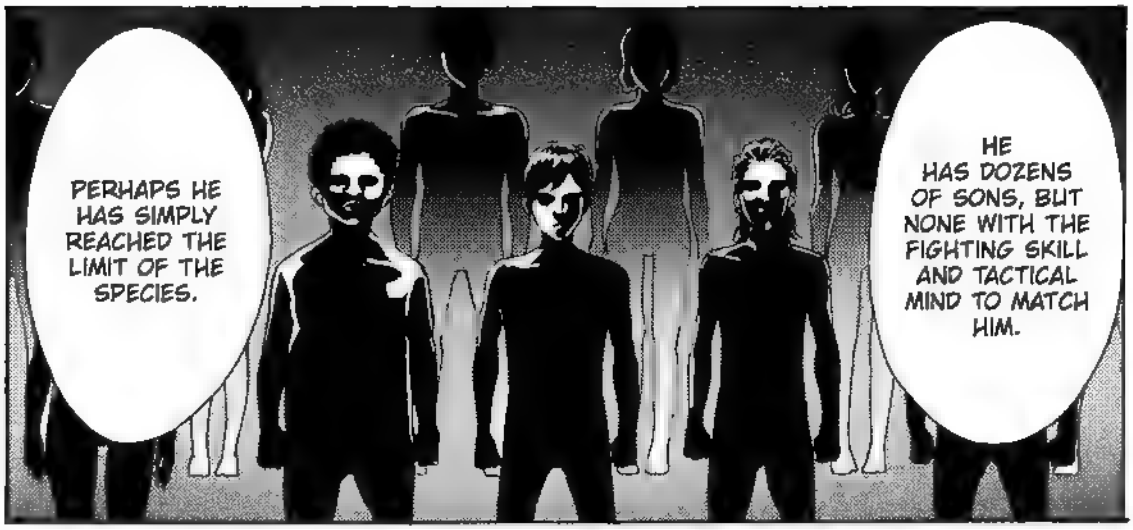
GACHA (CLICK)

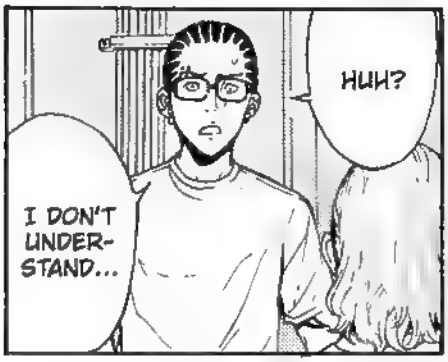
...UH... RIGHT.
!?
PLEASE CONTINUE. DON'T MIND ME.
...OKAY...
THERE ARE VERY FEW PEOPLE WITH YOUR SKILL SET WHO WOULD AGREE TO COME TO SUCH A PLACE.
IT'S A GOOD THING WE HAVE SOMEONE LIKE YOU ALONG...
IT HASN'T BEEN DECIDED.
HUH???
SO WHAT DOES THE PLAN SAY IS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN NEXT?

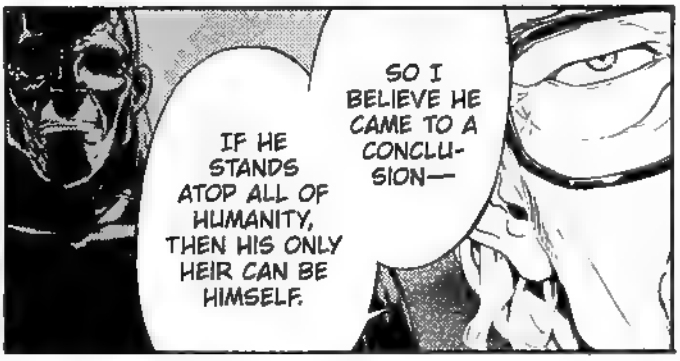
WE MUST IMPROVISE ON THE FLY, REACTING FLUIDLY TO THE SITUATION. OTHERWISE, THE ENEMY WILL IDENTIFY OUR PLAN, AND IT WILL FALL APART.
I HAVEN'T DECIDED THE NEXT STEP. IN FACT, I MUSTN'T.
OUR PRESENT OPPONENT IS TOO DANGER-OUS.
THAT IS A MEASURE OF HOW DANGEROUS ZASHID TURUS IS.
YES, AND THAT'S NOT THAT BAD.
AT PRES-ENT, I'D PUT THEM UNDER 10%.
T-TEN !?
AND OUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS ARE?

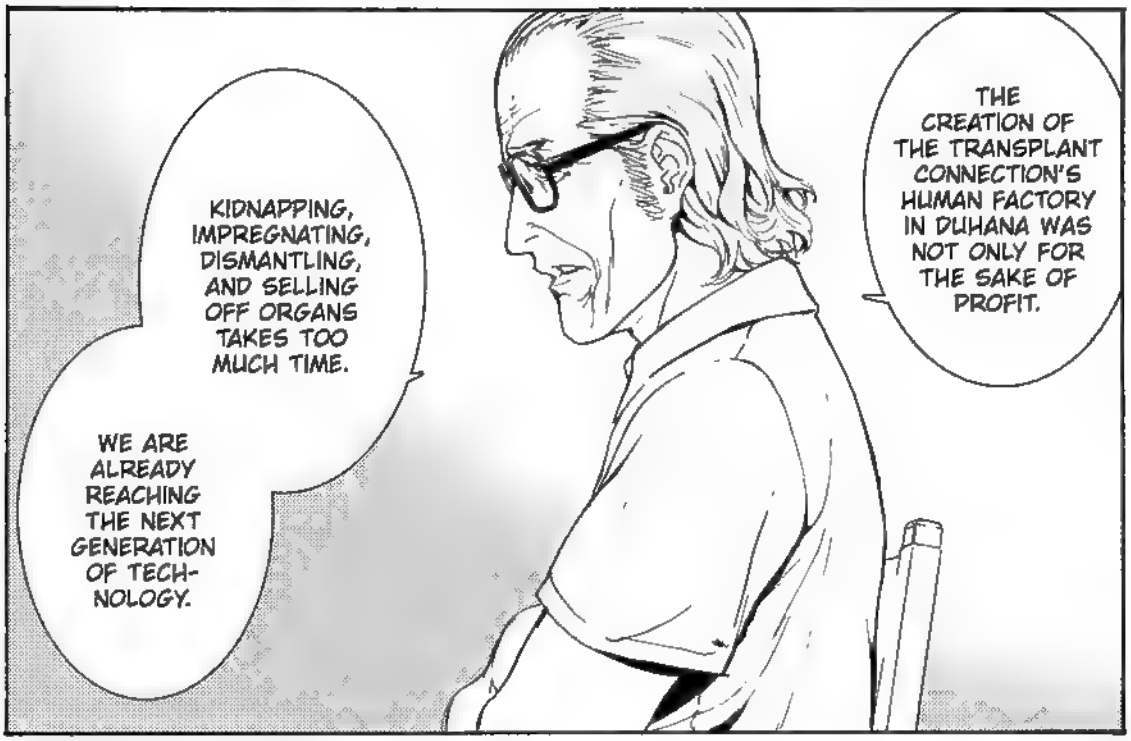
ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS CREATE A SITUATION WHERE MAMORU FIGHTS ONE-ON-ONE AGAINST THE GUY WHO ESSENTIALLY LEADS THE COUNTRY, RIGHT?
THE BIT ABOUT KILLING ZASHID IS THE ESPECIALLY TRICKY PART.
CONSIDERING MAMORU HIJIKATA'S INSANE DEMANDS, THAT IS.
THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT HARD. MAMORU HIJIKATA DEMANDS A DUEL WITH ZASHID— WHICH IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF DIFFICULTY.
HIS CHANCES OF WINNING IN A ONE-ON-ONE DUEL ARE LESS THAN 10%, YOU SEE.
NO.

ZASHID WILL MAKE HIS MOVE IN JUST THREE MONTHS.
BUT WE RAN OUT OF TIME.
IT WOULD TAKE THAT LONG ...?
TO BE HONEST, I COULD HAVE USED ANOTHER HALF A YEAR TO COMB ALL MY INTELLIGENCE SOURCES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ZASHID'S PERSONAL INFORMATION.
HE WILL APPEAR IN JAPAN TO GO AFTER HARUKA TOOYAMA.
ZASHID'S VISIT IS OFFICIAL NOW.
ZASHID'S ONE WEAKNESS IS HIS LACK OF AN HEIR.
WHAT DOES ANY OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH HARUKA???

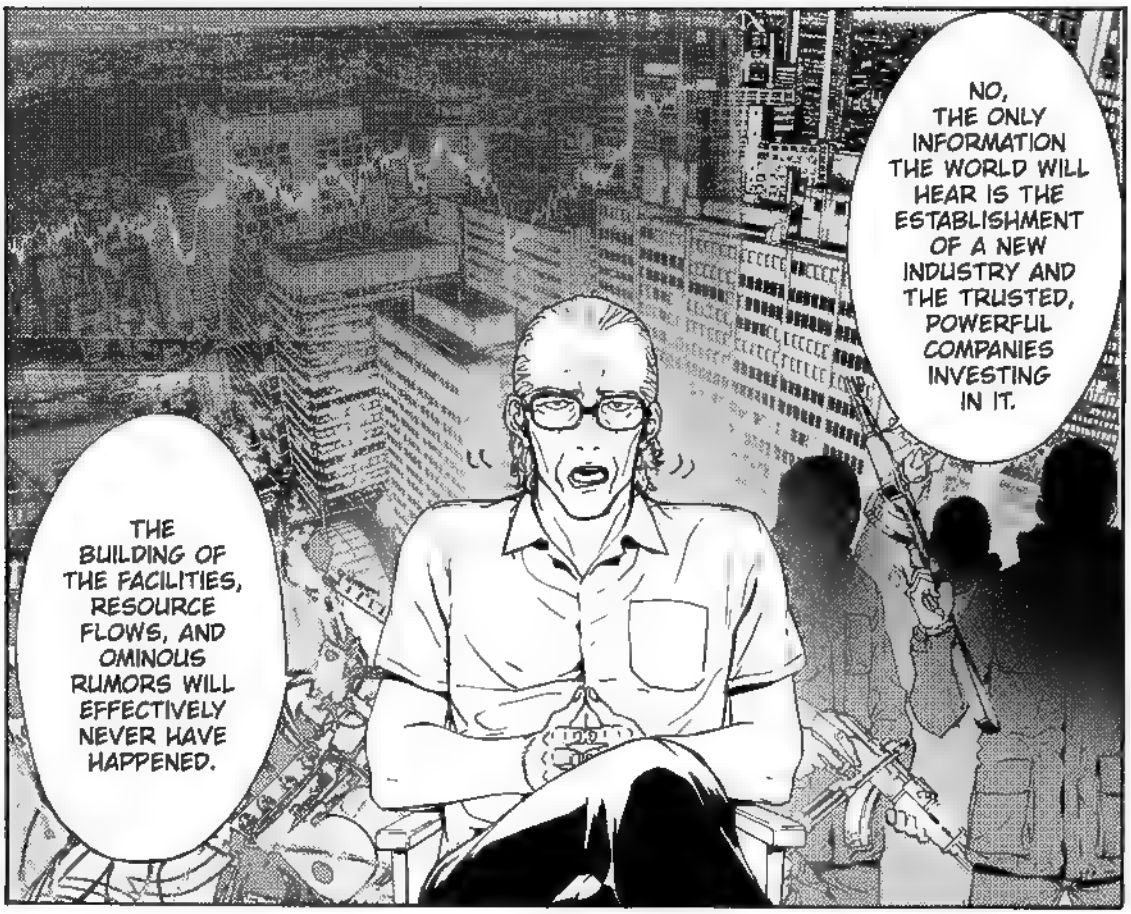

PERHAPS HE HAS SIMPLY REACHED THE LIMIT OF THE SPECIES.
HE HAS DOZENS OF SONS, BUT NONE WITH THE FIGHTING SKILL AND TACTICAL MIND TO MATCH HIM.


HUH?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND...


SO I BELIEVE HE CAME TO A CONCLU-SION—
IF HE STANDS ATOP ALL OF HUMANITY, THEN HIS ONLY HEIR CAN BE HIMSELF.

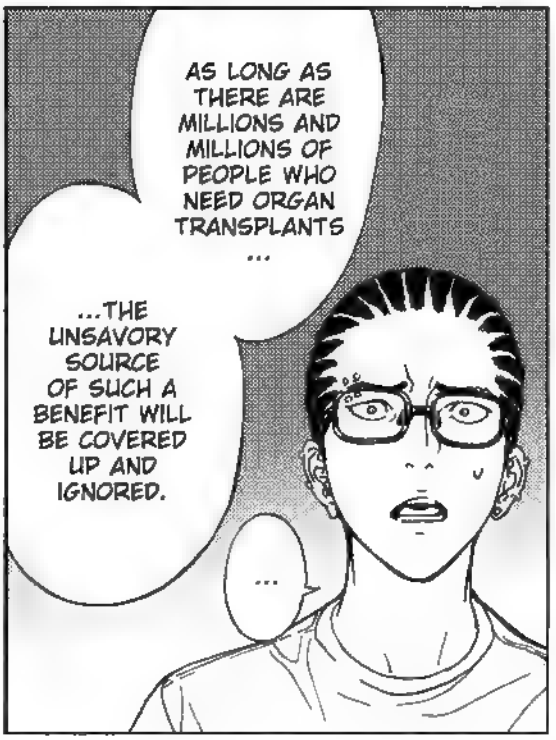

THE CREATION OF THE TRANSPLANT CONNECTION'S HUMAN FACTORY IN DUHANA WAS NOT ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF PROFIT.
KIDNAPPING, IMPREGNATING, DISMANTLING, AND SELLING OFF ORGANS TAKES TOO MUCH TIME.
WE ARE ALREADY REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TECH-NOLOGY.

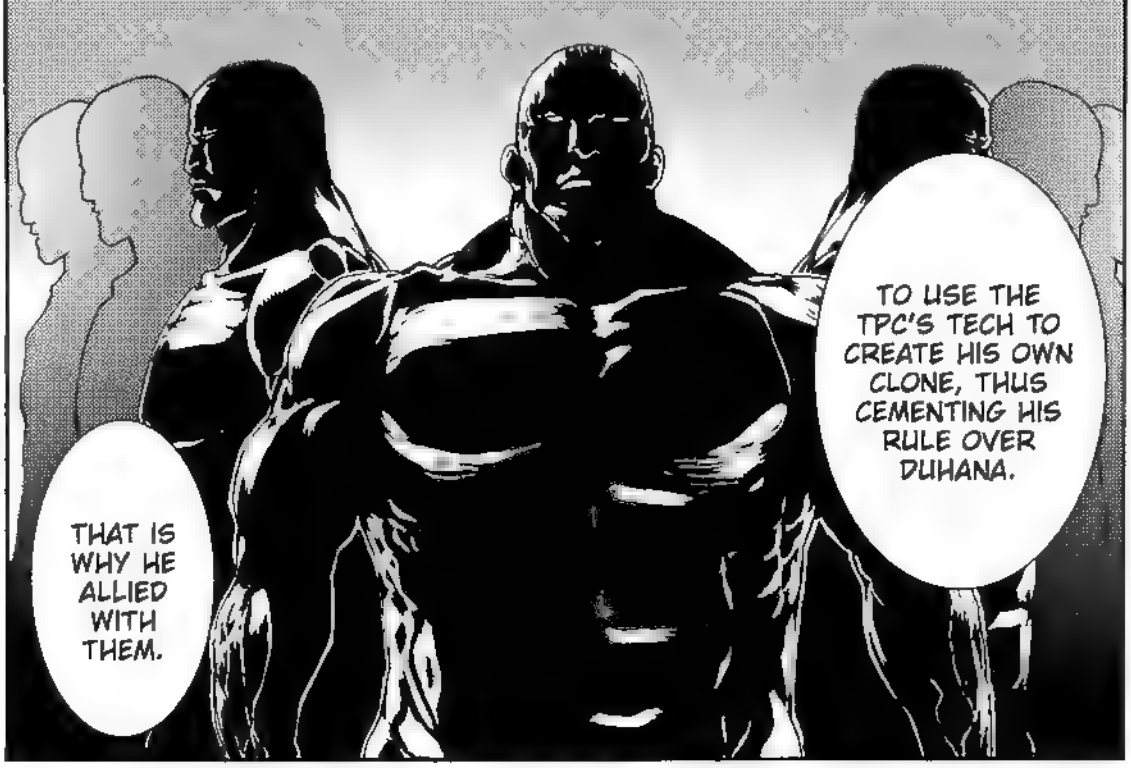
CORRECT.
...!? YOU MEAN...
... CLONING !?
THE TPC'S NEXT STEP IS BASED UPON THIS INITIAL INVESTMENT: THE CREATION OF A CLONING INDUSTRY.
IF THEY MAKE IT WORK IN THE UNRECOGNIZED STATE OF DUHANA, THEY HAVE NO FEAR OF RUNNING AFOUL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.
THEY WILL BE ABLE TO SELL IT FOR REAL. A SECRET CRIME SYNDICATE OPERATING IN THE OPEN.
B-BUT THE REST OF THE WORLD WON'T STAND FOR THIS AT ALL!

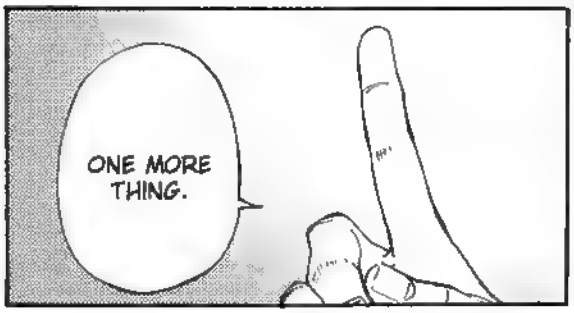

NO, THE ONLY INFORMATION THE WORLD WILL HEAR IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW INDUSTRY AND THE TRUSTED, POWERFUL COMPANIES INVESTING IN IT.
THE BUILDING OF THE FACILITIES, RESOURCE FLOWS, AND OMINOUS RUMORS WILL EFFECTIVELY NEVER HAVE HAPPENED.

THEN WHAT ZASHID WANTS IS...

YES.


AS LONG AS THERE ARE MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO NEED ORGAN TRANSPLANTS ...
...THE UNSAVORY SOURCE OF SUCH A BENEFIT WILL BE COVERED UP AND IGNORED.
...


TO USE THE TPC'S TECH TO CREATE HIS OWN CLONE, THUS CEMENTING HIS RULE OVER DUHANA.
THAT IS WHY HE ALLIED WITH THEM.


ONE MORE THING.

..

THIS IS THE PART THAT WILL MAKE HIS PLAN HORRIFYINGLY PERSONAL TO YOU.

DOGA
(THWAM)
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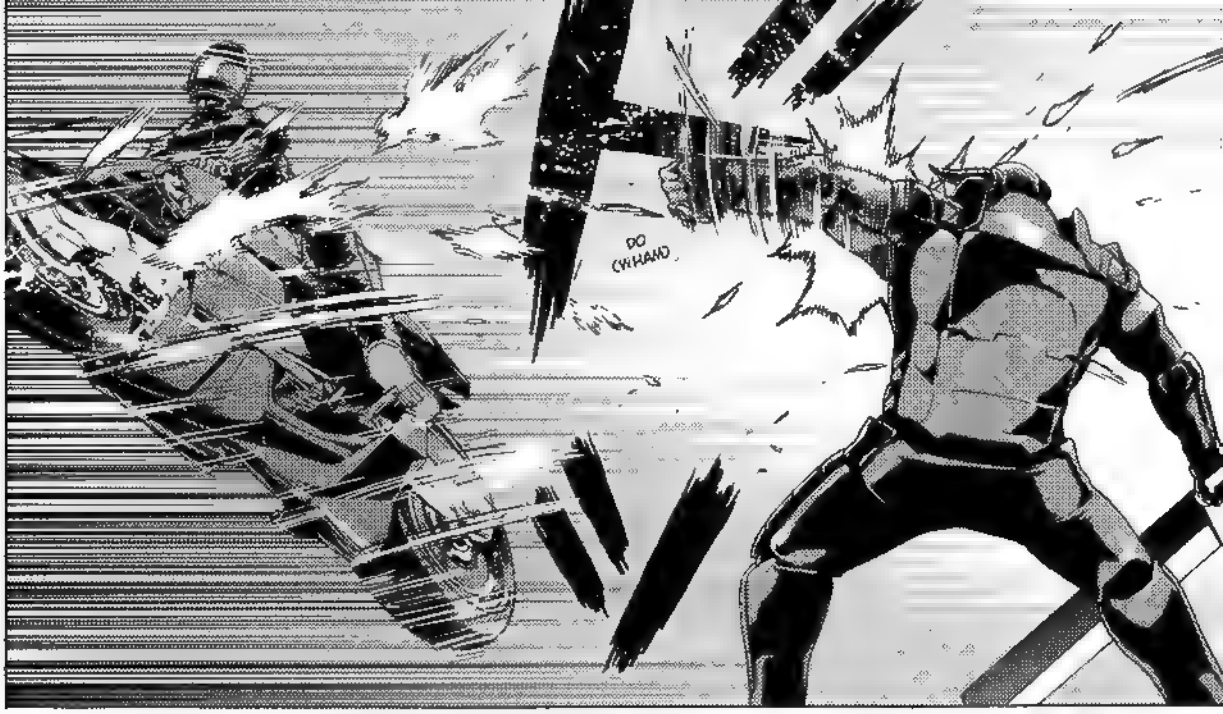
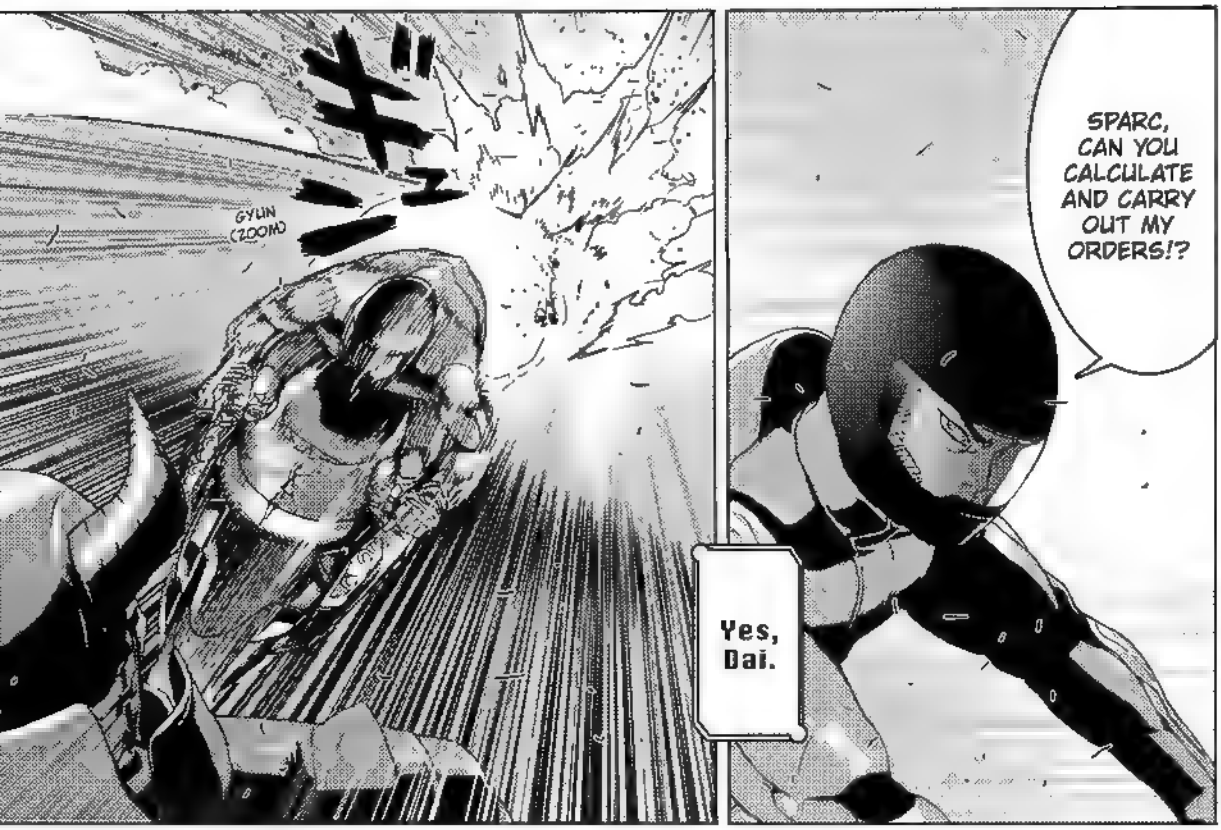

DO
(WHAM)

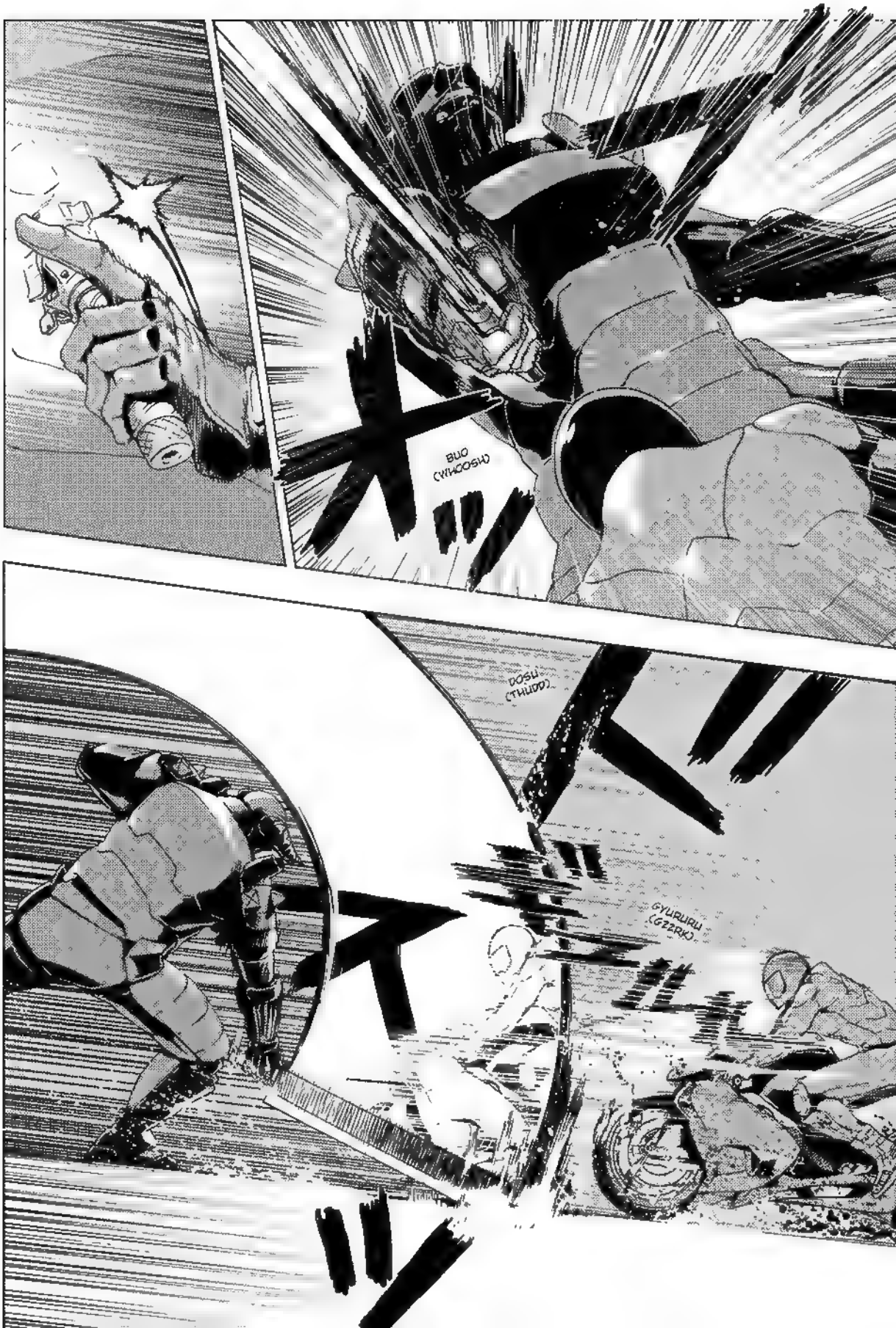
ZUZAZAZA
(ZZZSH)

DAMN!
I'D HAVE
FINISHED AGES
AGO IF I WAS
ALLOWED TO
JUST KILL
HIM!
...
HOW THE
HELL ARE
YOU SO
HARD!?

SO WHAT'S LEFT!?
BUT WITH THE WAY HIS BODYSUIT ABSORBS IMPACT, NO AMOUNT OF STRIKING WILL DO THE TRICK!

...


GYUN (ZOOM)
SPARC, CAN YOU CALCULATE AND CARRY OUT MY ORDERS!?
Yes, Dai.


BUO (WHOOSH)
DOSU (THUDD)
GYURURU (GEARS)

UGH!
GIN
(TWANG)

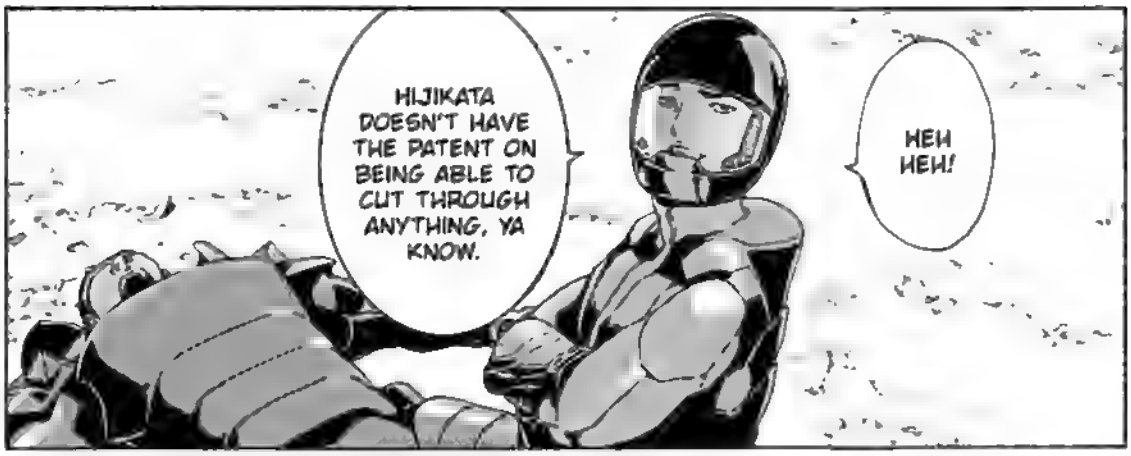
WHAT WAS THAT SHOCK I JUST FELT!?
ZUZA (ZZT SHA)
HERE GOES!
CAUTION
KIM (SKREE)
BAM (WHAM)
GASHA (WHACK)

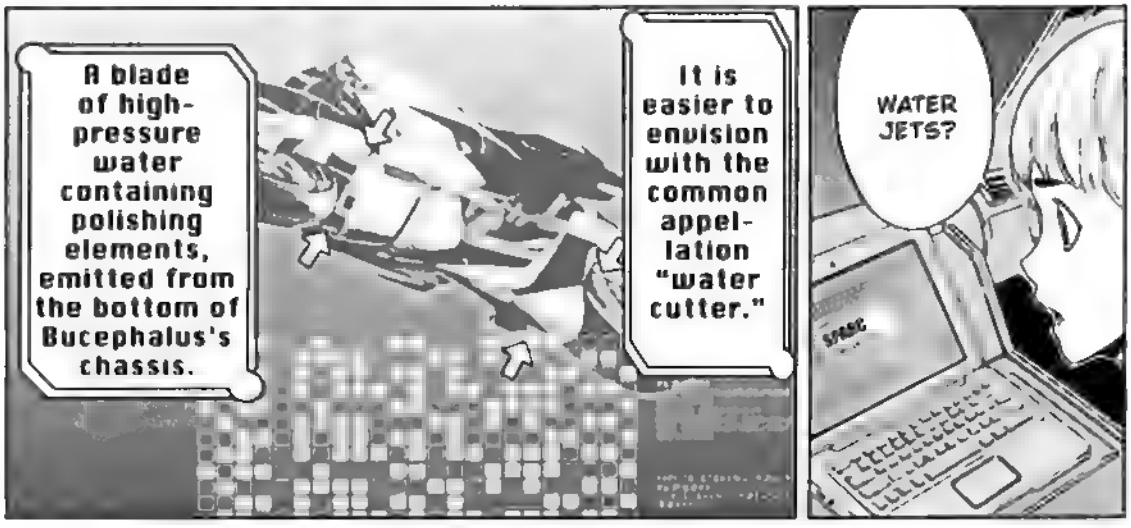
DOGO
(THWAM)

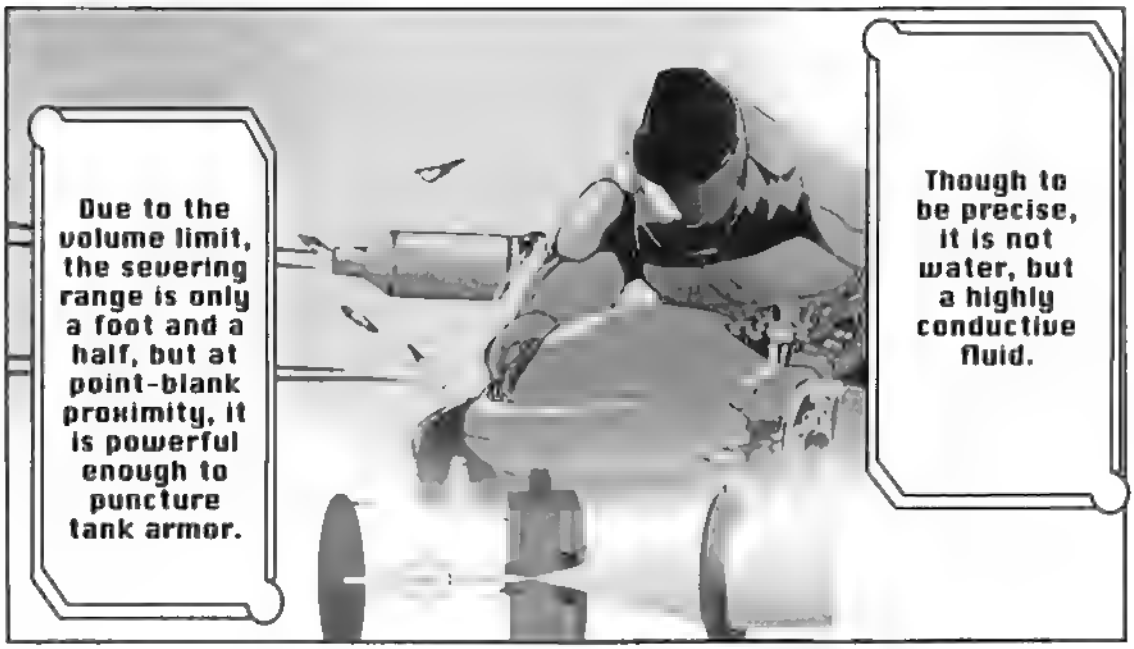
DOGO
(TWAIN)

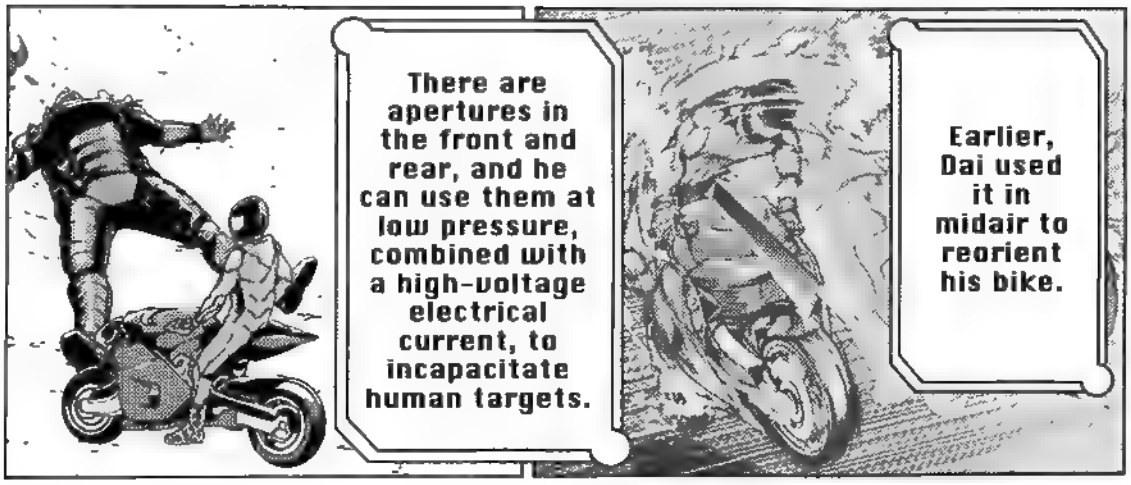
WHA
...?
DAN
(DMP)

DAI-SAN!
ZUDAN (WHOMP)
BUT... HOW DID YOU DO THAT?


HIJIKATA DOESN'T HAVE THE PATENT ON BEING ABLE TO CUT THROUGH ANYTHING, YA KNOW.
HEH HEH!


A blade of high-pressure water containing polishing elements, emitted from the bottom of Bucephalus's chassis.
It is easier to envision with the common appel-lation "water cutter."
WATER JETS?


Due to the volume limit, the severing range is only a foot and a half, but at point-blank proximity, it is powerful enough to puncture tank armor.
Though to be precise, it is not water, but a highly conductive fluid.

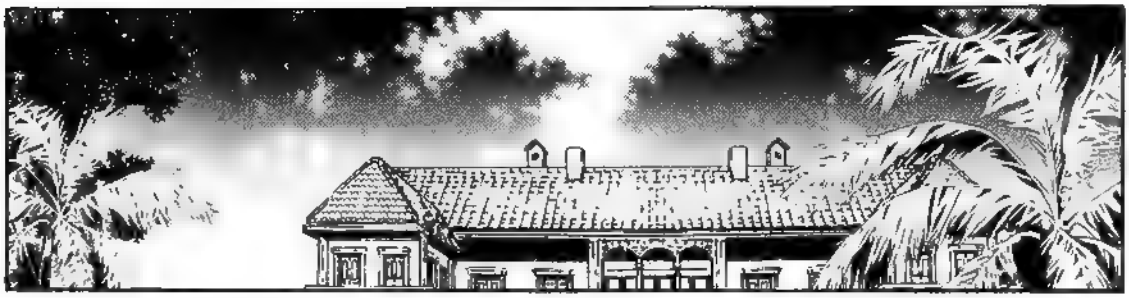

There are apertures in the front and rear, and he can use them at low pressure, combined with a high-voltage electrical current, to incapacitate human targets.
Earlier, Dai used it in midair to reorient his bike.

AND THIS SON OF A BITCH FORCED ME TO USE MY ANTI-VEHICULAR WEAPONS.

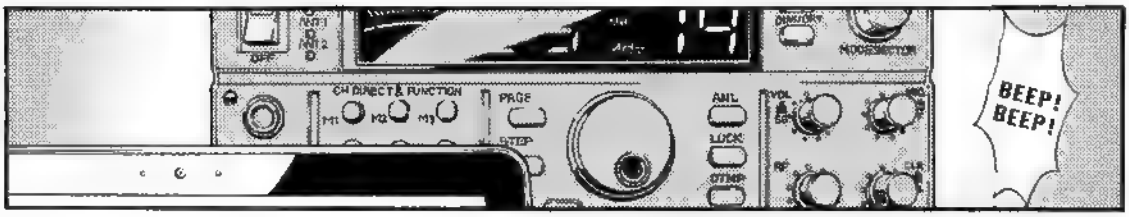
DON (BLAM)
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
DON

Dai!!
WHOA!

R-RIGHT.
CAPTURE TAUS AND PROVIDE SOME BACKUP ELSEWHERE ALREADY!
AH!
ドダ
DOTA (THUD)
?
ピ°
PI (BEEP)
PI
P
WASTED TOO MUCH TIME ON HIM... SLOPPY WORK, DAI...
Dai!
JUST GIVE ME FIVE MINUTES.
Your capaci-tors are out of power.
Three minutes and forty-four seconds until the fuel cells will store enough power for minimal activity.



WHAT MAKES IT SO HORRIFYING ...?


BEEP! BEEP!

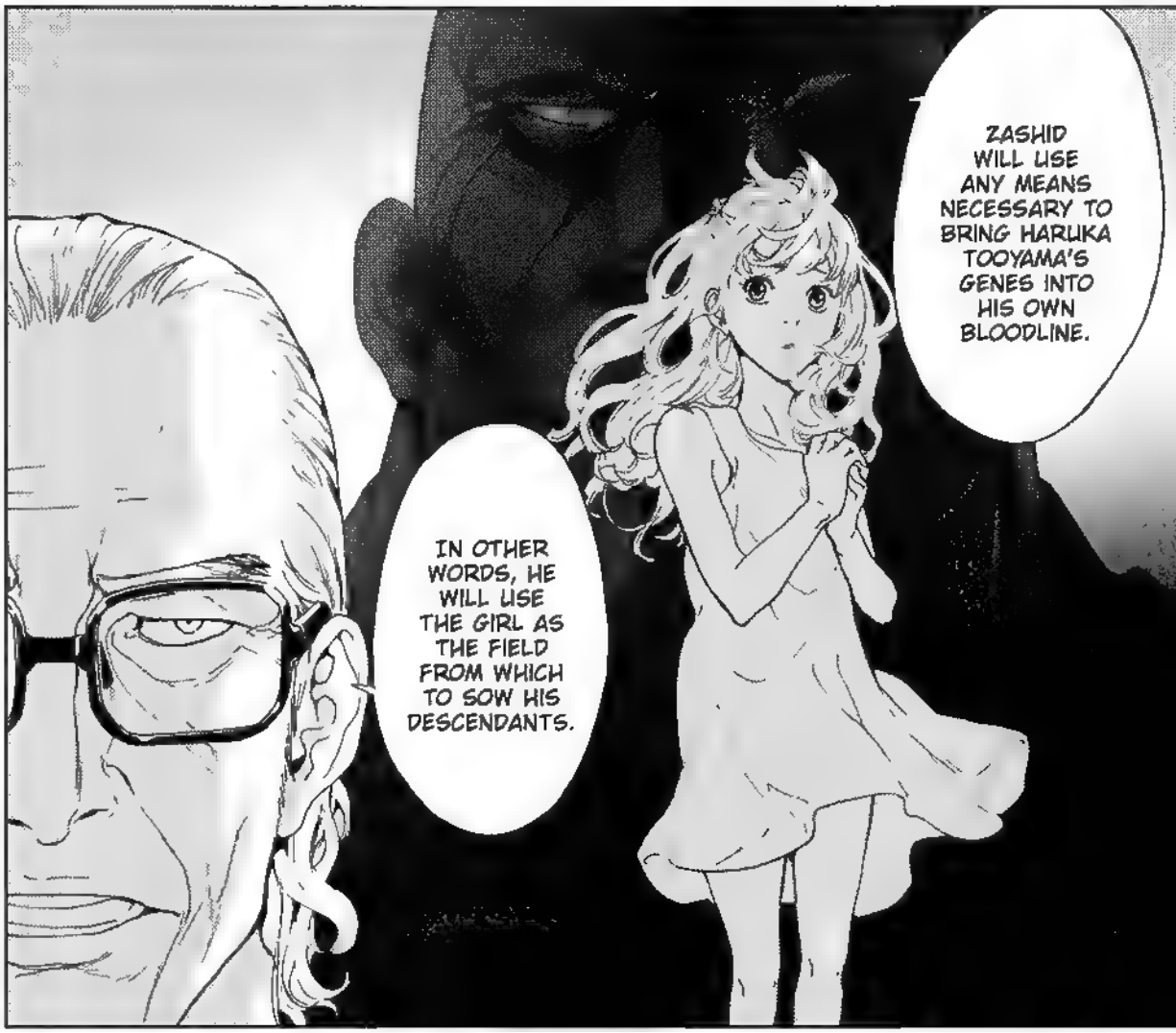
CAN YOU DECRYPT IT?
QUITE EASILY. WE'VE GOT THE BLACK UNIT ON OUR SIDE, REMEMBER.
THIS CALL IS AN ENCODED TRANSMISSION FROM THE DUHANA ARMY.
?

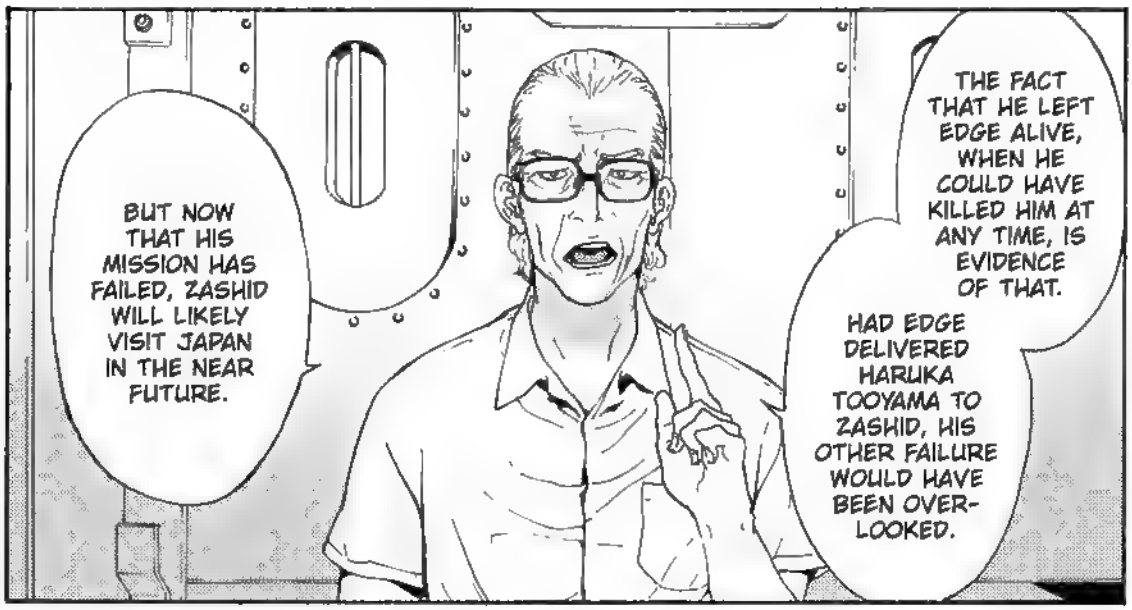
N.UNA
DUHANA
IT SAYS THE BASE AT NIUNA TO THE NORTH-WEST WAS RAIDED BY AN ARMED UNIT.
THE COMMANDING OFFICER, TAUS TURUS, WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE AS THE UNIT WITHDREW.
...
I HAVEN'T ORDERED THEM TO DO ANYTHING AS DRASTIC AS THAT.
WE'RE STILL ONLY IN THE PLANNING STAGES, AFTER ALL.
MAYBE IT WAS THAT BLACK UNIT THAT DID IT?
THAT'S A SURPRISE.
I DIDN'T THINK THERE WAS ANOTHER GROUP IN DUHANA WITH THE POWER TO DO THAT, ASIDE FROM US.

THE REPORTS SUGGEST BOTH ANTI-GOVERNMENT GUERRILLAS AND A MIXED UNIT OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN.
SO... WHAT DO WE DO?
WE DO NOTHING.
...
IF WE CALL THIS EDGE'S WORK, THE DOMESTIC UNREST WILL GROW, AND THAT'S SOMETHING WE CAN CAPITALIZE UPON.
WHEN YOU SAY...MIXED UNIT...
YOU DON'T MEAN...
UM, SIR...
WHAT IS IT?

WHAT IS IT? I CAN'T GET OVER THAT LITTLE DETAIL ...
ALSO, GOING BACK TO EARLIER ...
...YOU MENTIONED ANOTHER HORRIFYING AIM OF ZASHID'S...
CERTAINLY, THE ELEMENT NETWORK HAS THE POTENTIAL TO PULL THIS OFF.
MMM... WELL, THE POSSIBILITY CAN'T BE DISCOUNTED, I SUPPOSE.
PARDON ME. I WAS WRAPPED UP IN THIS SURPRISING DEVELOPMENT. INDEED, THAT'S AN IMPORTANT DETAIL TO YOU.
OH! YES, OF COURSE.
UH ...
"I OUGHT TO INTRODUCE THE POWER OF FORESIGHT TO MY GENETIC POOL."
WHAAAT !?
THERE-FORE, HIS NATURAL CONCLU-SION IS EASY TO PREDICT.
ZASHID TURUS IS BOTH PLOTTING TO MAKE A REINCARNATION OF HIMSELF INTO HIS HEIR AND SEEKING THE MOST POWERFUL GENES AVAILABLE.

I AM! IN FACT, I'M 99% CERTAIN OF IT.
YOU...YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!


ZASHID WILL USE ANY MEANS NECESSARY TO BRING HARUKA TOOYAMA'S GENES INTO HIS OWN BLOODLINE.
IN OTHER WORDS, HE WILL USE THE GIRL AS THE FIELD FROM WHICH TO SOW HIS DESCENDANTS.


THE FACT THAT HE LEFT EDGE ALIVE, WHEN HE COULD HAVE KILLED HIM AT ANY TIME, IS EVIDENCE OF THAT.
HAD EDGE DELIVERED HARUKA TOOYAMA TO ZASHID, HIS OTHER FAILURE WOULD HAVE BEEN OVER-LOOKED.
BUT NOW THAT HIS MISSION HAS FAILED, ZASHID WILL LIKELY VISIT JAPAN IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

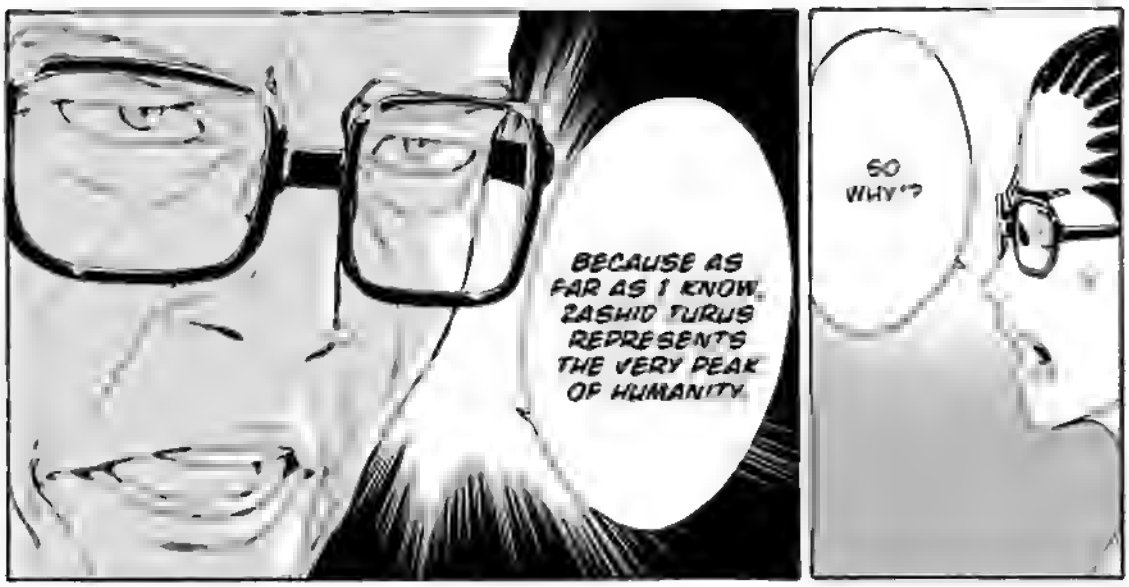
BUT THAT GUY'S A SUPER-HUMAN!
H-H-HE SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH TO PROTECT THE GIRL ON HIS OWN!

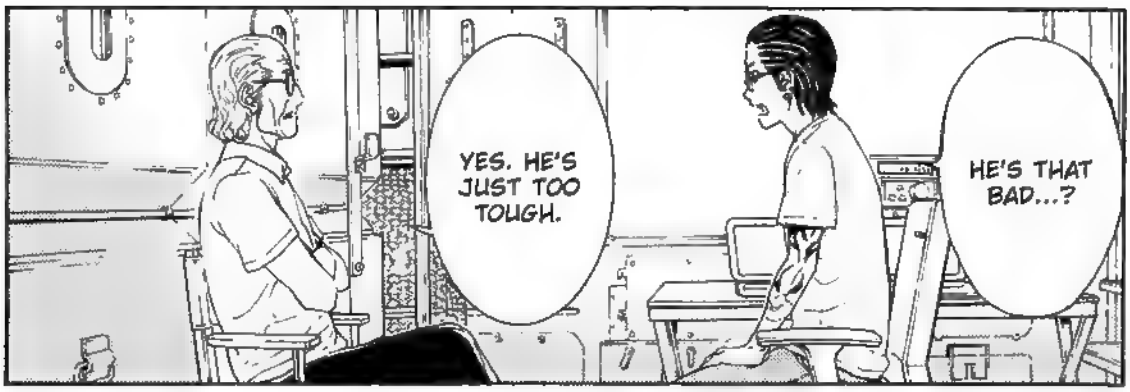
YOU HAVE TO KNOW THAT, RIGHT? I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU DON'T!

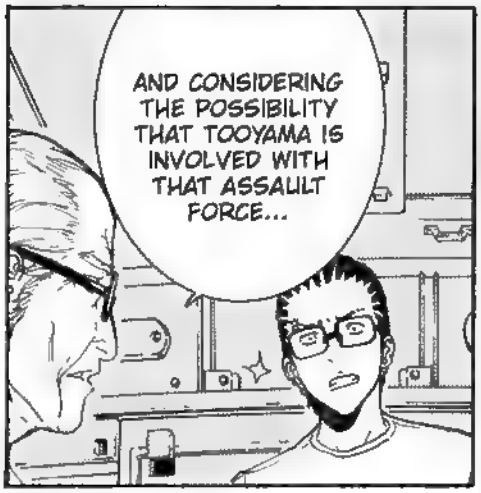
MAMORU HIJIKATA'S SNEAK OFFENSIVE HERE IS AN ATTEMPT TO CUT OFF THAT WAR IN JAPAN BEFORE IT HAPPENS.
HE PLANS TO PUT AN END TO ZASHID'S AMBITION IN HIS HOMELAND, FOR THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF WINNING OTHERWISE.

I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR FINDING THIS HARD TO BELIEVE
YES, MAMORU HIJIKATA'S PERSONAL FIGHTING POWER IS OFF THE CHARTS

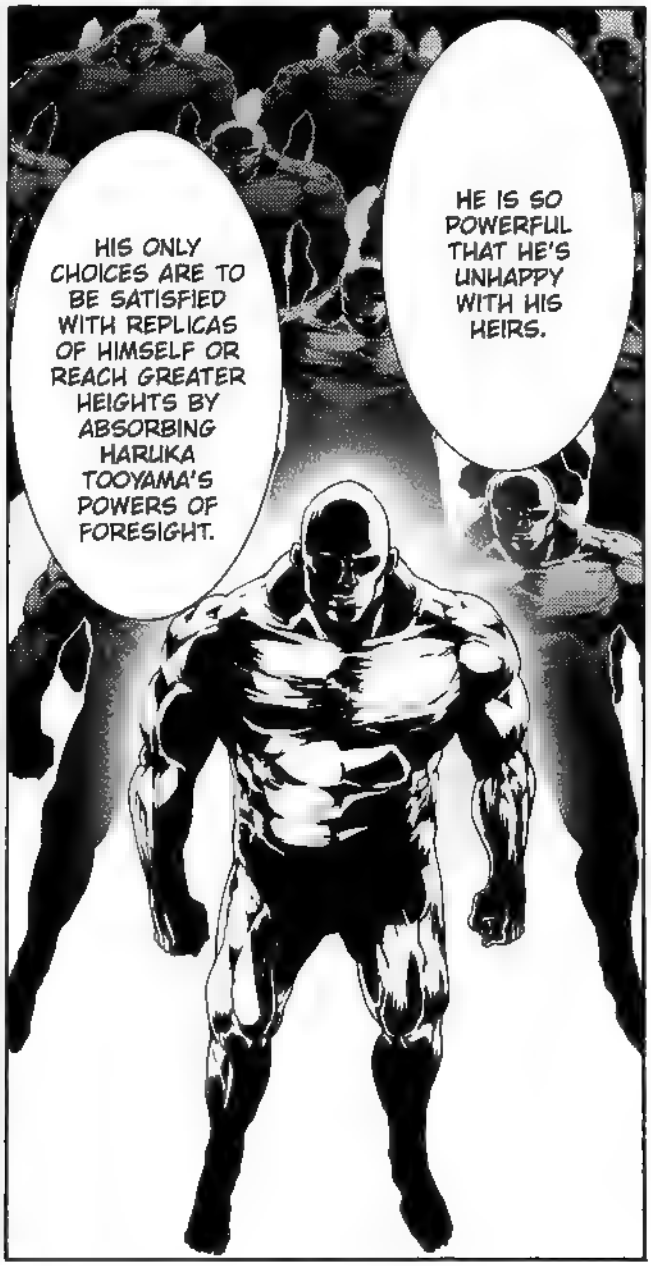
HE FENDED OFF AN ATTACK BY THE TRUMPS AND DEFEATED BOTH ZELM AND I.
HE STOOD TOE-TO-TOE WITH JESUS
HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE GREATEST WARRIORS IN THE ENTIRE WORLD


SO WHY?
BECAUSE AS FAR AS I KNOW, ZASHID TURUS REPRESENTS THE VERY PEAK OF HUMANITY.


YES. HE'S JUST TOO TOUGH.
HE'S THAT BAD...?

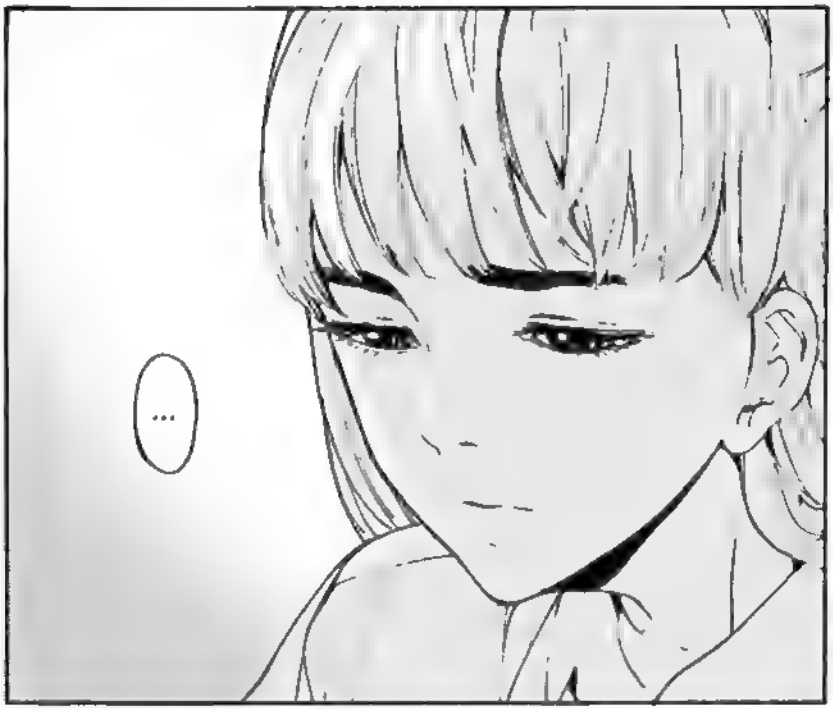

AND CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY THAT TOOYAMA IS INVOLVED WITH THAT ASSAULT FORCE...

THAT WOULD BE...A VERY BAD THING...


HIS ONLY CHOICES ARE TO BE SATISFIED WITH REPLICAS OF HIMSELF OR REACH GREATER HEIGHTS BY ABSORBING HARUKA TOOYAMA'S POWERS OF FORESIGHT.
HE IS SO POWERFUL THAT HE'S UNHAPPY WITH HIS HEIRS.

NO WAY...SHE WOULDN'T ...
YES. IF SHE LURKS IN THE BACKGROUND OF THIS DEVELOPMENT, IT COULD PRESAGE THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOME.
UM... MR. WISE-MAN...
...
IT REQUIRES SERIOUS THOUGHT.
WE MUST TAKE THIS POSSIBILITY INTO MIND WHEN CRAFTING OUR PLANS.
PLEASE, SIR.

I MAY HAVE DIFFERENT IDEALS FROM YOU, BUT THAT IS MY FORM OF JUSTICE AND WAY OF LIFE.
I DON'T NEED YOUR PRODDING. EVERY JOB I TAKE ON, I CONDUCT WITH ALL OF MY POWER.
WHETHER MAMORU HIJIKATA FALLS TO ZASHID OR NOT, I WILL UTILIZE ALL OF MY BRAIN TO FULFILL MY MISSION.
...



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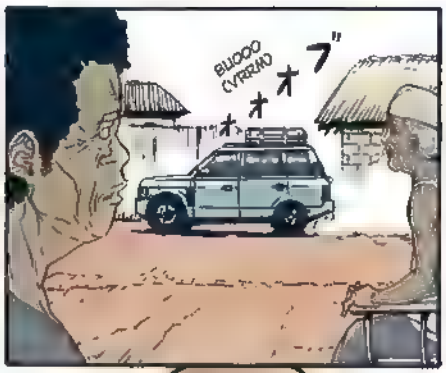
ガチャッ
GACHA (CLICK)


BUOOOO (VRRRM)
オ
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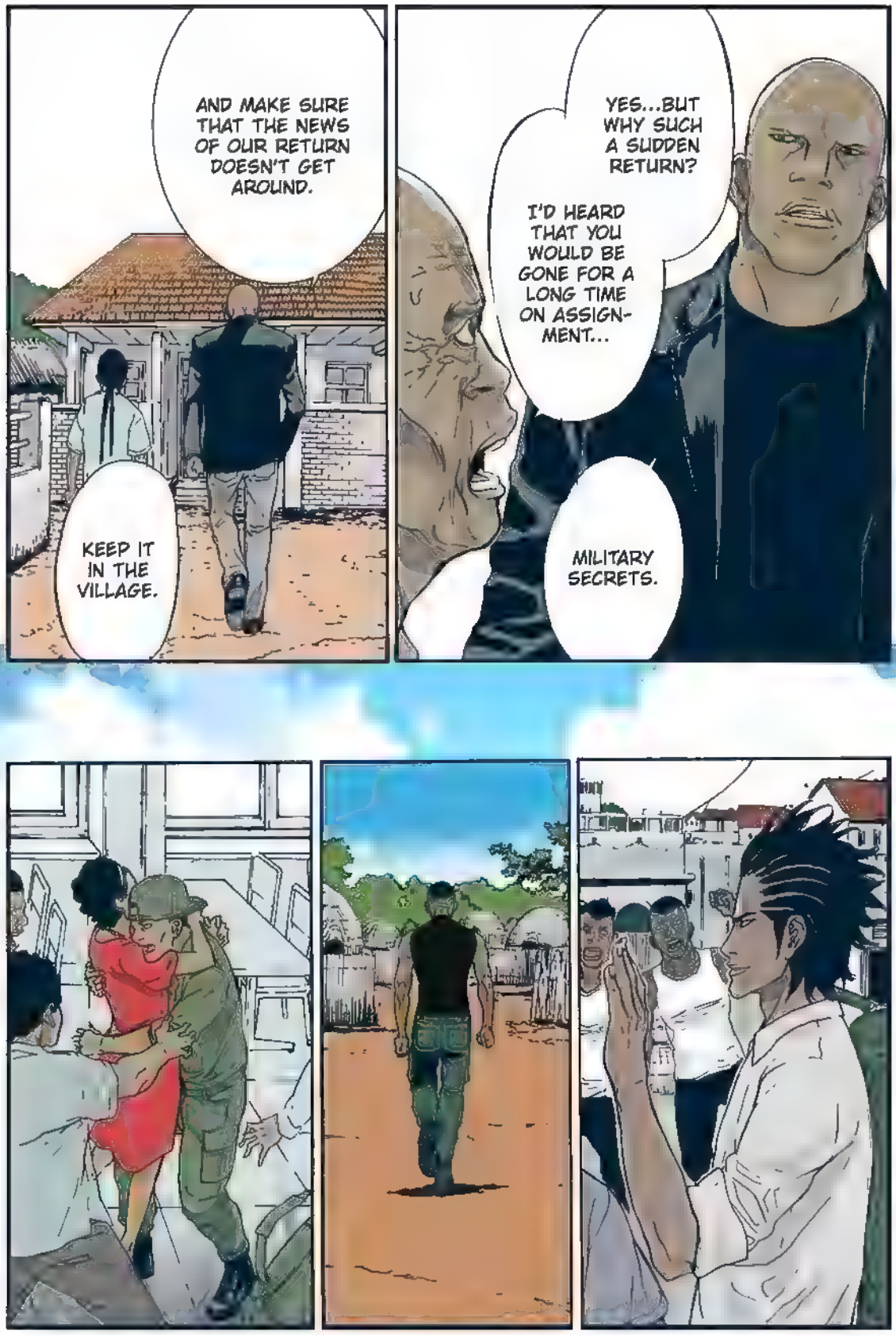
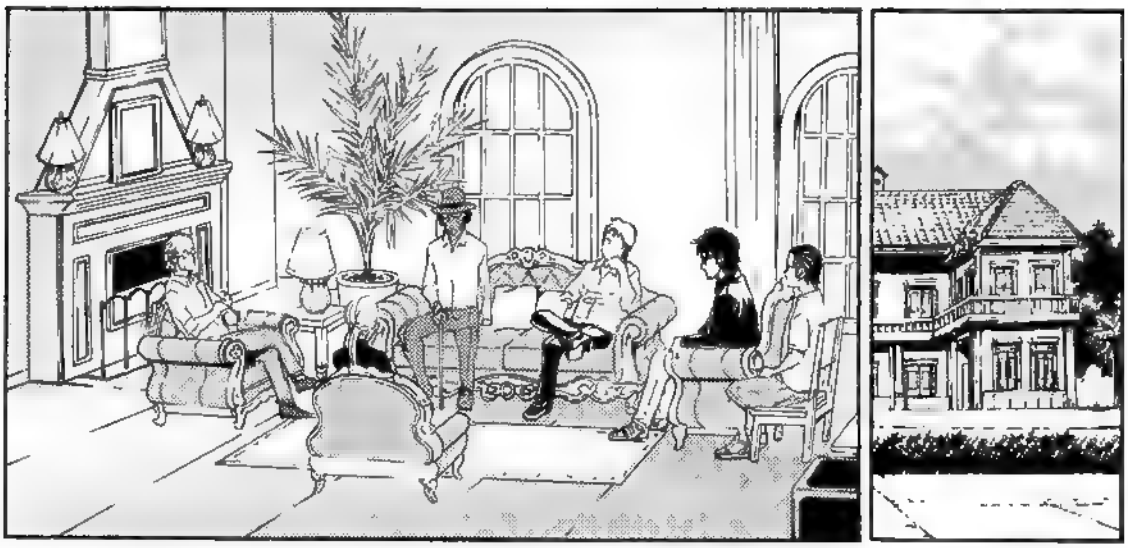
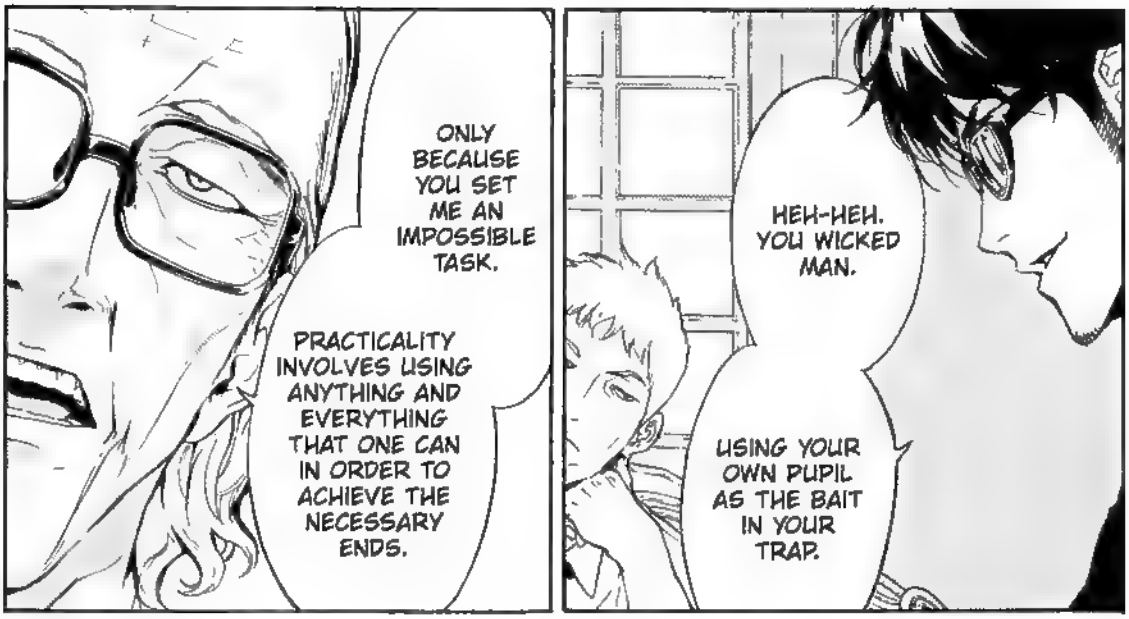
YOUNG SIR!? AND N'SINH!
IS DAD HERE...?


AND MAKE SURE THAT THE NEWS OF OUR RETURN DOESN'T GET AROUND.
KEEP IT IN THE VILLAGE.
YES...BUT WHY SUCH A SUDDEN RETURN?
I'D HEARD THAT YOU WOULD BE GONE FOR A LONG TIME ON ASSIGN-MENT...
MILITARY SECRETS.

Until
Death
do us
Part



THERE'S AN AIR OF UNREST WITHIN DUHANA.
IT HAS BEEN FOMENTED BY EDGE TURUS, ONCE THOUGHT TO BE ONE OF THE PRIMARY CANDIDATES TO LEAD THE COUNTRY.


HEH-HEH. YOU WICKED MAN.
USING YOUR OWN PUPIL AS THE BAIT IN YOUR TRAP.
ONLY BECAUSE YOU SET ME AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK.
PRACTICALITY INVOLVES USING ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT ONE CAN IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE NECESSARY ENDS.

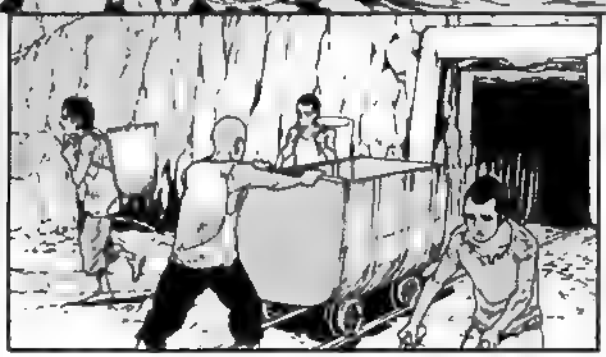
AS YOU KNOW, DEVELOPMENT HAS LAGGED HERE.
FORGET THE INTERNET. THEY ONLY HAVE TV IN THE BIG CITIES, WITH MOST INFORMATION DISSEMINATED THROUGH THE RADIO.
OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IS TO CHANGE THE PRESENT DOMESTIC SITUATION OF DUHANA.
AT THE MOMENT, I HAVE SENT THE MEMBERS OF THE BLACK UNIT BACK TO THEIR HOMES.
IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR US TO GATHER ADEQUATE INFORMATION...
...BUT THIS IS JUST WHAT A DICTATORSHIP WANTS: CONTROL OF INFORMATION.
THE CITIZENS CAN BARELY EKE OUT A LIVING, AND THEY HAVE NO TIME TO ASSOCIATE FAR AND WIDE.
SO WE WILL STRIKE OUR DICTATOR IN THIS WEAK POINT.
ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT CAN ALSO BE USED AGAINST THOSE IN POWER.

OF COURSE IT IS.
BUT IS IT ACTUALLY POSSIBLE?
THAT'S EASY TO SAY.
...I SEE.
PUT A THOUSAND PEOPLE INTO ACTION, AND TEN THOUSAND WILL REACT. MOVE TEN THOUSAND, AND A HUNDRED THOUSAND WILL RESPOND.
WHETHER DEVELOPED OR DEVELOPING, ALL COUNTRIES FOLLOW THE CONSTANT OF HUMAN NATURE.
WITHOUT NUMBERS OF OUR OWN, WE MUST MAKE USE OF THE DISCORD AMONG THIS NATION'S PEOPLE.
SO YOU SENT THEM NOT JUST TO COLLECT INTEL, BUT TO SPREAD NEWS OF EDGE'S REBELLION.

SO YOU'VE GOT A BALLOON FULL OF UNHAPPINESS AND FRUSTRATION, AND YOU'RE GOING TO BLOW IT UP EVEN BIGGER?
AS I SAID, THE TOP-DOWN CONTROL OF INFORMATION MEANS MANY PLACES WILL NOT BE AWARE OF IT.
YES, PRECISELY.
IN THIS SITUATION, WORD-OF-MOUTH IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL.
THE ISSUE RESTS ON WHAT HAPPENS IN BETWEEN.
AND WHEN IT'S COMPLETELY FULL, PRICK IT WITH A PIN.
IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE, PROVIDING WE HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO GET THERE.
I CANNOT SIMPLY ASSUME THAT THE POPULACE WILL ACT AS I PREDICT.
I AM KEEPING AN OPEN AND FLUID MIND IN REGARDS TO THAT.

...
WE'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT IN THAT MATTER.
...YOU SURE YOU WANT TO ATTEMPT THIS MADNESS?
HEY...
YOU COULD CALL IT KARMA.
IT'S NOT YOUR PLACE TO FEEL GUILTY.
THIS COUNTRY IS TWISTED BY A DICTATOR.
WE CAN DELIVER THE FIRST PUSH, BUT IN THE END, IT COMES DOWN TO ZASHID TURUS'S RULE AND THE PEOPLE WHO ALLOWED IT TO HAPPEN.

THIS IS WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO BRING YOU ALONG.
NO, IT'S SOME-THING I'M CERTAIN WILL HAPPEN ALONG THE WAY.
R-RIGHT...
YOU'RE TOO GOOD-HEARTED A MAN...
...
OH, YEAH. ALL READY.
HUH?
HAVE WE HACKED INTO THE SATELLITE NETWORK YET?
IT'S TIME.



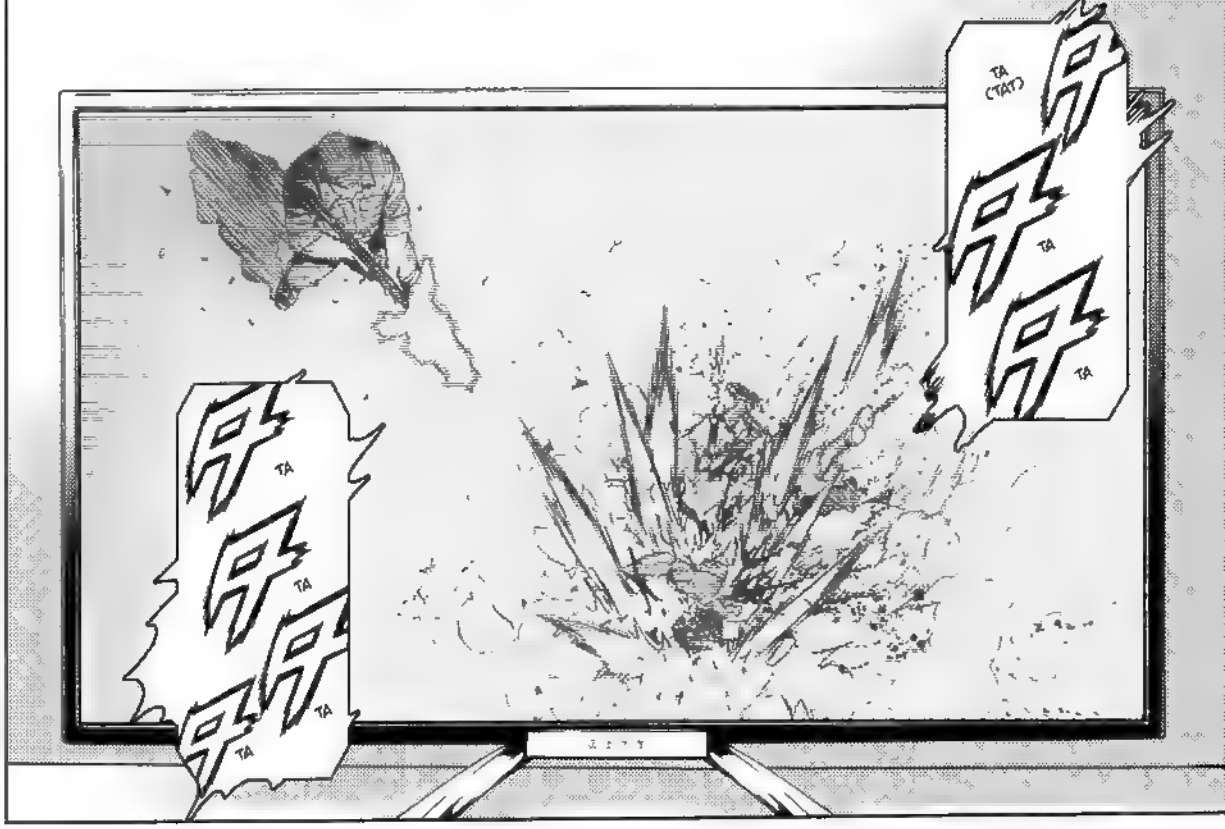
NO STOP-PING!
ゼー
ZEE
ゼー
ZEE (WHEEZE)
DOSU (THUD)
ドズッ
I SAID, NO STOPPING !!

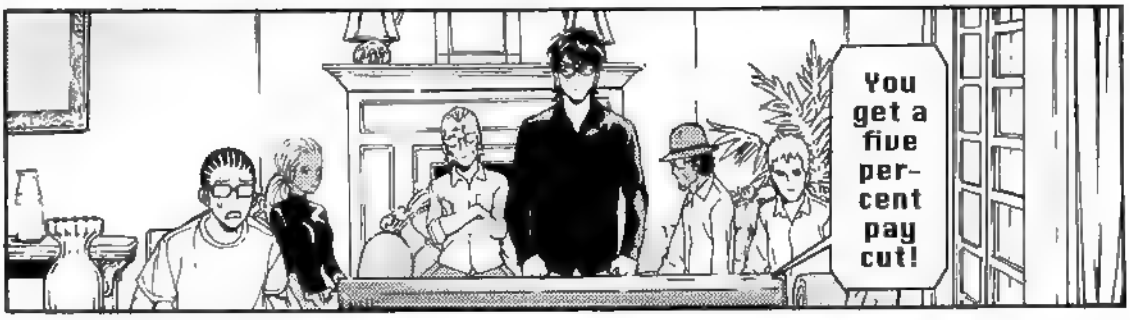
YOU GET FIVE MINUTES.
IF YOU HAVEN'T GOTTEN OFF YOUR ASS BY THEN, I'LL KILL YOU.
WE'RE BEHIND THE MONTHLY QUOTA BECAUSE OF SLUGS LIKE YOU!
AND THAT AFFECTS MY WAGES!!
HRG ...
AAAAGH !!
SUSHUUU (BSSHT)
DID YOU HEAR THAT!?
TA (TAT)
TA
TA
TA
DON'T HURT THE CATTLE, YOU IDIOT!
THAT'LL ONLY PUT US FURTHER BEHIND!
RRRGH!

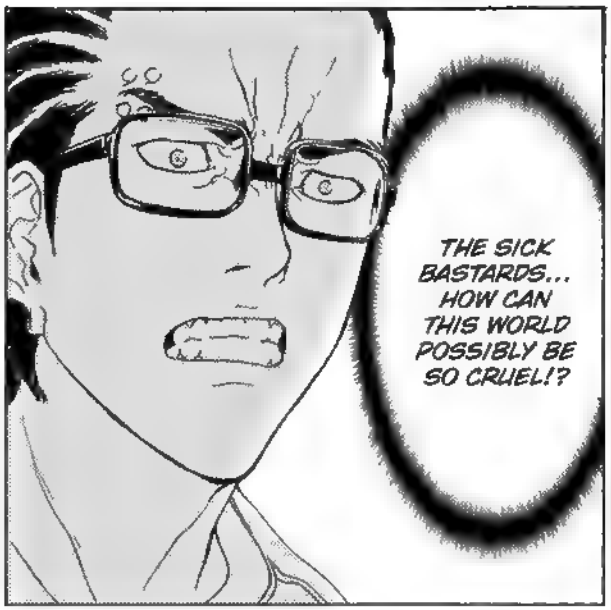
KACHI (CLIK)
SHUT UP! HE'S USELESS TO START WITH!
TA
TA
TA
TA
BACHU (BSHT)
BACHU
BACHU
BACHU
KASHA (KSHK)
!!

QUIT STANDING AROUND GAPING!
GET BACK TO WORK!!
FINE, WHATEVER.
THAT'S IT. YOU GET A FIVE PERCENT PAY CUT.
TA (TAT)
TA
TA
TA
TA
GASHI (SNAG)
DON'T STAND, OR THEY'LL SEE YOU.
...

"
WHILE THOSE GALBRAN SOLDIERS
HOLD IT IN
THIS IS JUST A DRUG IN THE BLOOD
B-BUT DUDE
IF THE SUN OF THE CHIEF CAN CONTROL HIMSELF WATCHING IT, WHY CAN'T YOU!?
ALL THOSE PEOPLE DOWN THERE BELONG TO OUR TRIBE.


TA (TAT)
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA


You get a five per-cent pay cut!


THE SICK BASTARDS... HOW CAN THIS WORLD POSSIBLY BE SO CRUEL!?

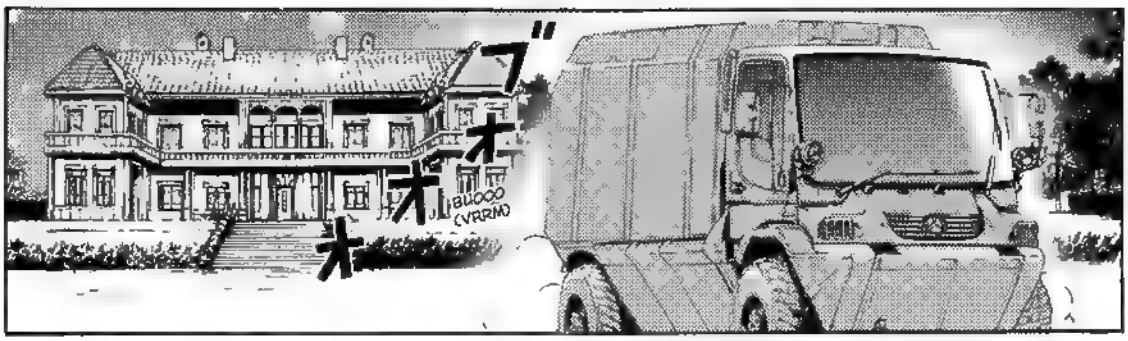
...

...

PROFES-
SOR...
OF COURSE.
IT MUST HAPPEN AT REGULAR INTERVALS TO HOLD ANY MEANING.
CAN EDGE TURUS'S NEXT REBELLION STRIKE *RIGHT THERE*?
BUT YOU CANNOT FIGHT. THE SCARS OF A BLADE WILL DRAW THE ENEMY'S NOTICE.
IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THEM TO BE AWARE OF US.
I KNOW.

I'VE BEEN ITCHING FOR SOME ACTION.
THEN I'LL DO IT FOR HIM.
SU (SHMP)
スッ

...
...
AND IF I DON'T GET SOME EXERCISE, MY INSTINCTS WILL GO DULL.


ブオオオ
BUOOO (VRRM)

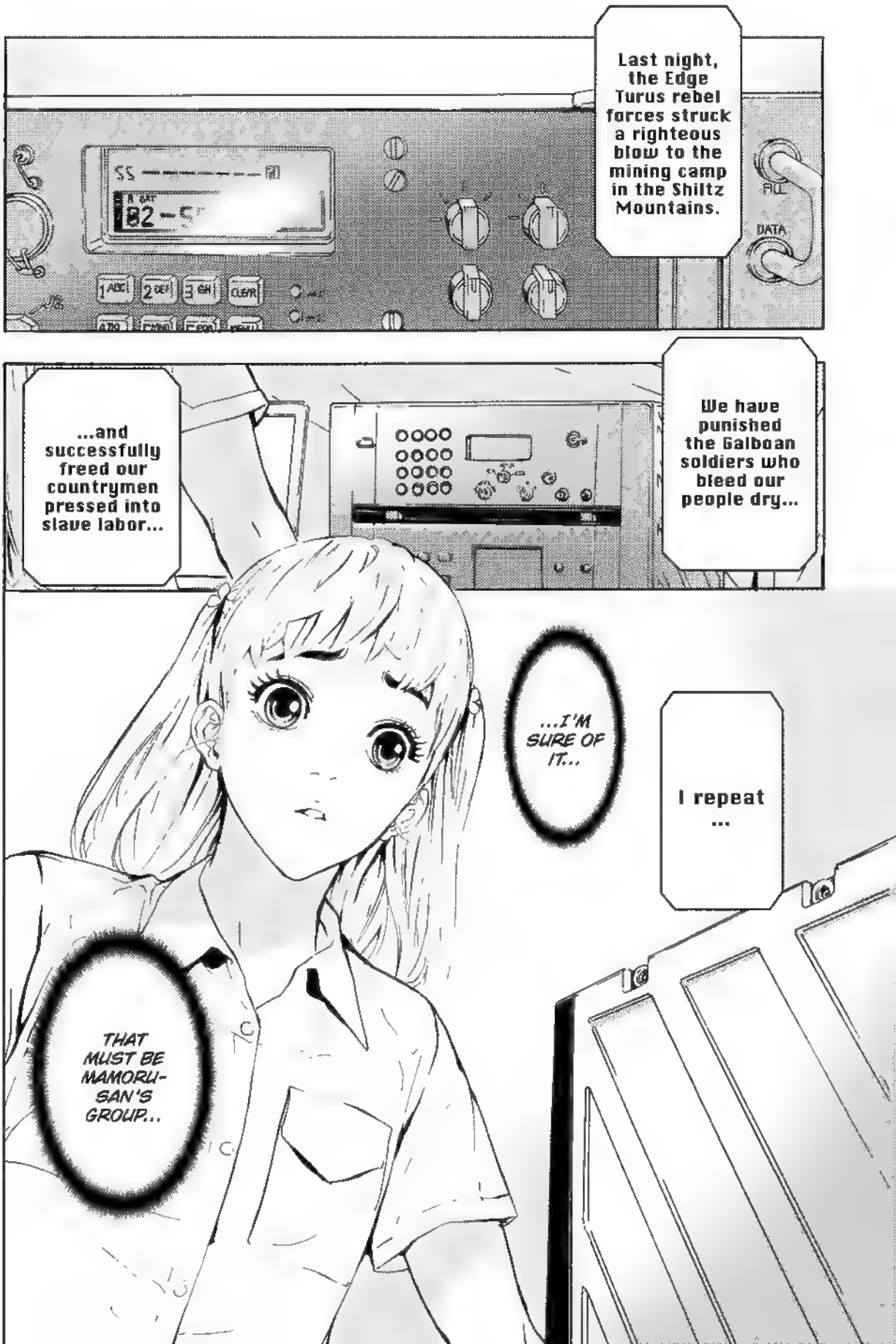
AN INTERESTING WAY TO SELECT MEMBERS FOR THE MISSION...

WAS THAT THE POINT OF THAT VIDEO, WISEMAN?

CERTAINLY. WHEN YOU'RE SCRAPING TOGETHER MEMBERS, IT HELPS TO HAVE SHARED GOALS.

IGAWA IS A GOOD-HEARTED MAN WHO CANNOT OVERLOOK SUCH ACTIONS.
RAGI IS PROUD OF HER BLACK HERITAGE.
KOMURA MIGHT LOOK ALOOF, BUT HE'S STILL GOT THE OLD-SCHOOL YAKUZA ROMANTI-CISM.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL LABEL THIS THE WORK OF REBEL GUERRILLAS AND TRY TO HUSH UP THE INCIDENT WITHOUT ANY PUBLICITY.
YOU NOTICE A LOT IN A SHORT TIME.
BUT WE HAVE THE GREAT AND RESPECTED EDGE TURUS ON OUR SIDE.


Last night, the Edge Turus rebel forces struck a righteous blow to the mining camp in the Shiltz Mountains.
...and successfully freed our countrymen pressed into slave labor...
We have punished the Galboan soldiers who bleed our people dry...
...I'M SURE OF IT...
I repeat ...
THAT MUST BE MAMORU-SAN'S GROUP...

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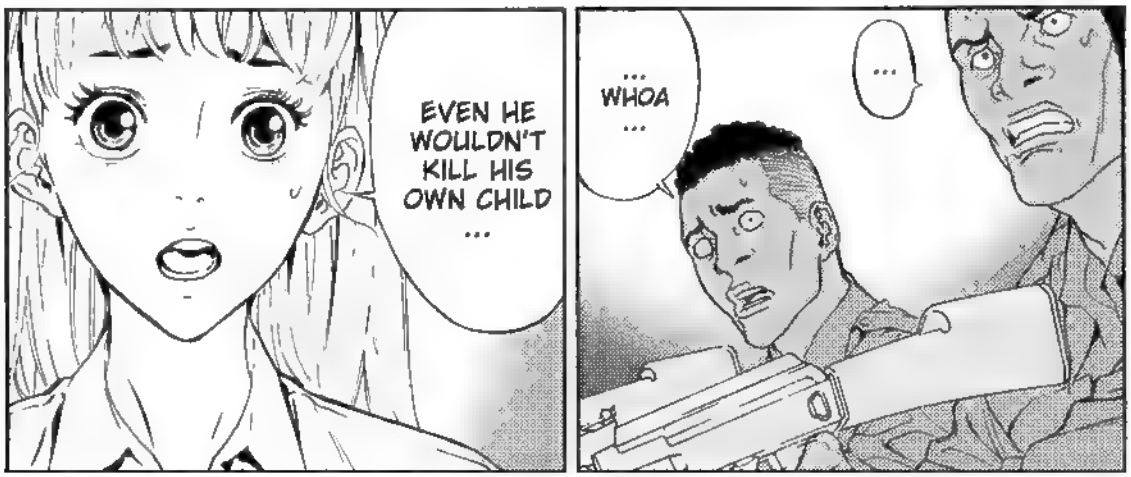
...
KILL ME.
...
STUPID MOVE...
YOU OUGHT TO THANK THIS LITTLE LADY.
WE HAVE PREPARED A FAIR TRIAL FOR YOU, GUARANTEED BY INTERNATIONAL LAW.

YOU'VE MADE THE OLD MAN ANGRY.
YOU CAPTURED ME AND HUMILIATED THE FAMILY.

THERE'S NO REASON TO LIVE.
AND I'LL BE TORN TO SHREDS WHEN IT HAPPENS.
NONE OF YOU WILL ESCAPE HIS WRATH.


EVEN HE WOULDN'T KILL HIS OWN CHILD ...
... WHOA ...
...

EVEN TO HIS OWN SONS, THE MAN IS A MONSTER.
I SUPPOSE A LITTLE FOREIGN GIRL LIKE YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND HIM.
AT AGE TWELVE, HE FACED GRAMPS— HIS OWN FATHER...
...DOGA TURUS, A MILITARY CAPTAIN OF GALBOA AND THE LEADER OF OUR FAMILY—AND STRANGLED HIM TO DEATH, TAKING HIS PLACE AT THE HEAD.
AS HIS OWN MEN WATCHED, HE FREED A HUNDRED OF THOSE TAKEN PRISONER...
AT FIFTEEN, HE LED HIS OWN UNIT AND WIPED OUT AN ARMY BRIGADE.
HE WENT TO WAR AT THIRTEEN AND EARNED THREE COMBAT MEDALS.

...AND BEAT EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM TO DEATH WITH HIS OWN HANDS.
IT WAS A SIGN TO THE ENEMY AND A SHOW OF STRENGTH TO HIS COUNTRY-MEN.

ONCE HE BECAME THE HERO OF THE COUNTRY, ZASHID RULED AS A DICTATOR.
HE SPARED NO MERCY EVEN TO HIS SONS IN DEMONSTRATING HIS OWN GLORY.
...
DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE DANGER HE REPRESENTS NOW!?
EVEN WITH AN ENTIRE FAMILY OF VETERAN WARRIORS, ALL OF HIS SONS COULD ATTACK HIM AT ONCE AND NEVER KNOCK HIM OFF HIS FEET!!

...I CAN SEE WHAT A MONSTER THIS GUY IS, EVEN IF IT'S HALF MADE-UP.
GLU GYUG?
COMIN' FROM THIS GIANT ...

(BZZ)
YOU SUMMONED ME, SIR?
KON (KNOCK)
KON
SIR.
PRIORITIZE DOMESTIC CONTROL AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN.
SPARE NO THOUGHT FOR TAUS'S LIFE.
PUT TOGETHER A TASK FORCE AND ANNIHILATE THE GROUP THAT WIPED OUT TAUS'S SQUAD.

YOUR TOP PRIORITY IS STOPPING THE GUERRILLAS AND ELIMINATING THEM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
AS YOU COMMAND.
AGAIN, IF EDGE SHOULD ACTUALLY BE AMONG THEM, HIS LIFE IS NOT TO BE SPARED.
AND ORDER THAT THIS MYSTERIOUS GROUP CLAIMING TO BE EDGE'S MEETS THE SAME FATE.
BUT THEIR STINGS HAVE RESULTED IN FATALITIES!
A SIMPLE WANDERING INSECT FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN, NO MORE.
LET US BE CAUTIOUS AND RETIRE ...
...TO ANOTHER ROOM!
EXCELLENCY!
THERE'S A WASP!
WHOA!
ANY HEAD OF STATE WHO FLEES A LITTLE BEE IS A LAUGHINGSTOCK.
B-BUT...

???
...?

YOU AND EVERY OTHER LIVING THING IN THIS WORLD ARE TOO SLOW AND STUPID TO ATTRACT MY ATTENTION.
BEGONE FROM MY SIGHT!

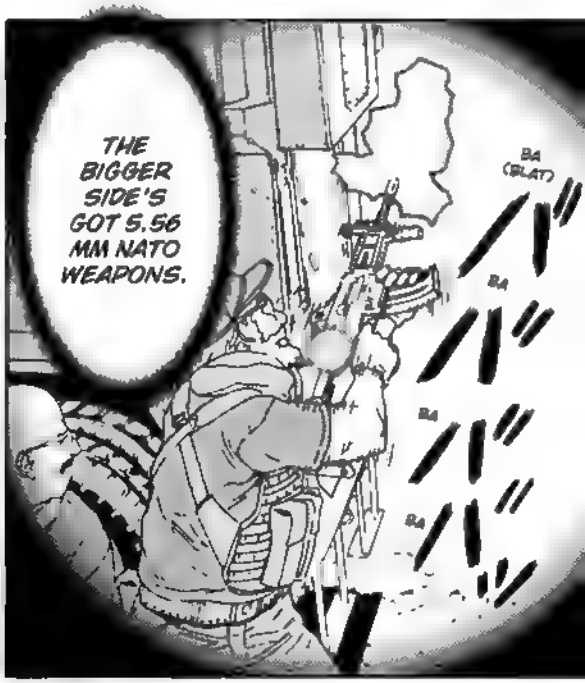
I SENSE A SLIGHT POSSIBILITY THAT SOMEONE IS ORCHESTRATING THESE EVENTS...
ALSO, BE CAREFUL ...
SIR?
SIR, YES, SIR!
GUCHA (CRUNCH)
グチャッ
IF IT IS TRUE, TEACH THEM UTTER REMORSE FOR CASTING THEIR SIGHTS ON ZASHID TURUS.

ZAWA (MURMUR)
ZAWA
HMM?
GUESS I'LL HIT UP A CAMP TOMORROW AND SEE WHAT THE SECURITY'S LIKE.
WE'VE GOT MOST OF THE CURRENT DETAILS...BUT I'M LACKING THAT NICE BIT OF OOMPH TO BRING BACK WITH ME.
HEY! WE'VE GOT TROUBLE !!
ROCK SOLID! TELL THE ENTIRE VILLAGE!
IS THAT TRUE?
A GROUP OF WHITE MEN, ATTACKING HOMES AND TAKING AWAY THE CHILDREN!
WHAT !?
KIDNAP-PERS IN THE NEXT VILLAGE OVER!
THEY SAY IT'S HAPPENING TO VILLAGES ALL AROUND!
WHAT IS IT!? WHAT HAP-PENED !?

GASHA (KSHAK)
BATAN (SLAM)
TSK! LEAVE THIS JOB TO THE SOLDIER!
MAKE SURE EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THIS.
TAKE YOUR FAMILIES INTO THE JUNGLE FOR A FEW DAYS.
THIS'LL BE A WORTHY TALE TO TELL.
KACHI (CLICK)
DO (BOOM)
BUOOO (VRRM)

VERY DEFINITELY A GUN-FIGHT

OTHER SIDE'S SMALLER? NO, BASED ON THE FIRE, IT'S A LONE GUNMAN.
THAT'S AN AK-47.
DO (BOOM)


THE BIGGER SIDE'S GOT 5.56 MM NATO WEAPONS.
BA (BLAT)

DA (DSH)

—!

BASHU

BA
BA
BA
BA
BA
BA
BA
BA
BA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
(DAK)
DON
(BOOM)

DOOM
(KABOOM)
WHO IS THAT GUY...? HE'S FUCKING GOOD...

IF THEY'RE AFTER THE KIDS, USE 'EM AS HOSTAGES!
OKAY!
SON OF A BITCH!!
BASH
(BLASH!)

DON (BOOM)
DOSA (THUD)
ドサッ
YOU DON'T GET TO PULL THIS BULLSHIT IN MY COUNTRY!!
DA (BRAK)
DA
DA
DA

THANKS FOR THE BACKUP.

ガシャ
GASHA (KSHLINK)
カチッ
KACHI (CLICK)
WHEN DID HE —!?
EASY.

I KNOW YOU. THE BOXER ON THE TRUMPS, RIGHT?
JESUS !?
...NAME'S WALI...
TRUST ME, I GOT AN INVITATION.
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!?

THAT'S ONE OF THE TPC'S CHILD-SNATCHING SQUADS.

AND THIS WAS THE PRICE OF DOING BUSINESS.

chapter 183

INVITATION? WHADDAYA MEAN, JESUS!?
TELL WISEMAN THAT I ONLY ACCEPTED THIS OFFER TO HELP HARUKA TOOYAMA.
AND I'LL ONLY EXPENSE ONE GLASS OF CHEAP BOURBON. THAT'S A DEAL.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
HE'LL UNDER-STAND.

...
WHAT... YOU DON'T KNOW?
WASN'T DANTE 313 JUST A PLAN TO CREATE AN ORGAN-MANUFACTURING PLANT!?
WHY WOULD THE TRANSPLANT CONNECTION DO THIS STUFF WITHIN DUHANA ANYWAY!?
EVENTUALLY, ONCE THE CLONING INDUSTRY GETS IN FULL SWING, THEY'LL SWITCH OVER TO A NICE CLEAN BUSINESS, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO WAIT AROUND FOR THAT.
AND THAT LABEL IS JUST FOR SHOW. IN REALITY, IT'S A FACILITY FOR IMPREGNATING SLAVE WOMEN AND RAISING THE CHILDREN TO AN APPROPRIATE SIZE.
JUST BUILDING A "FACTORY" DOESN'T COVER THE ACTUAL SUPPLY GOING IN, RIGHT?
THIS IS THE GROUP'S MAKE-OR-BREAK GAMBLE, SO IF I CAN RAZE THEIR ATTEMPT TO THE GROUND, IT'LL DEAL A FATAL BLOW TO THE TPC.
THEY SAY THERE'S MASSIVE FUNDING GOING INTO THIS PLACE TO BUILD AN EVENTUAL CLONING FACILITY.

I'M GONNA SEE TO IT THAT THEY PAY THEIR *TAB*.
...

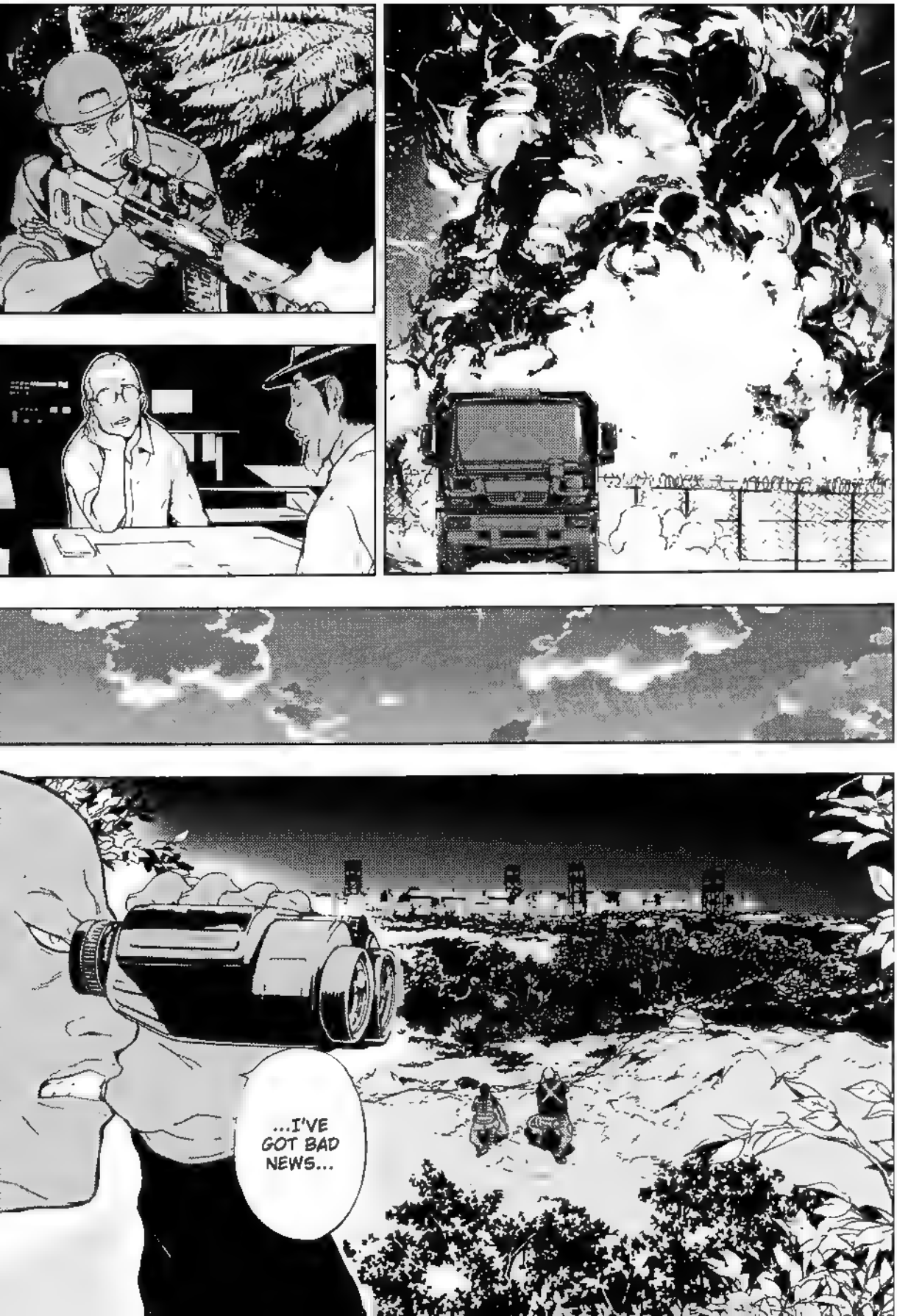
WITH PLENTY OF INTEREST FOR WHAT THEY DID TO MY PUPILS.

... HM ...

THE FUTURE OF YOUR COUNTRY IS CRYING.
YOU CAN HANDLE THE REST HERE.
HUH !?
H-HEY...

...HE WAS THAT DETERMINED TO GET BACK AT THAT MASSIVE SYNDICATE ...
I DIDN'T REALIZE ...
...

WELL, WELL...AN ELITE BLACK UNIT FIGHTER, REDUCED TO BABYSITTING ...


...I'VE GOT BAD NEWS...

SECURITY IS AMPED UP.
THEY'RE ON TO US.
...
JUST MAKE SURE YOU PULL BACK AT THE RIGHT MOMENT.
WHAT'S NEXT?
Ensure an escape route and continue as planned.
BOOM
BOOM

シュウウ
SHUUU
シュウウ
SHUUU (FWEE)
TA (TAT)
TA
TA
TA
DO (BLAM)
DO
GA (GAT)
GA
GA
GA
DO
DO
DO
DO
DON (BLAM)
DON

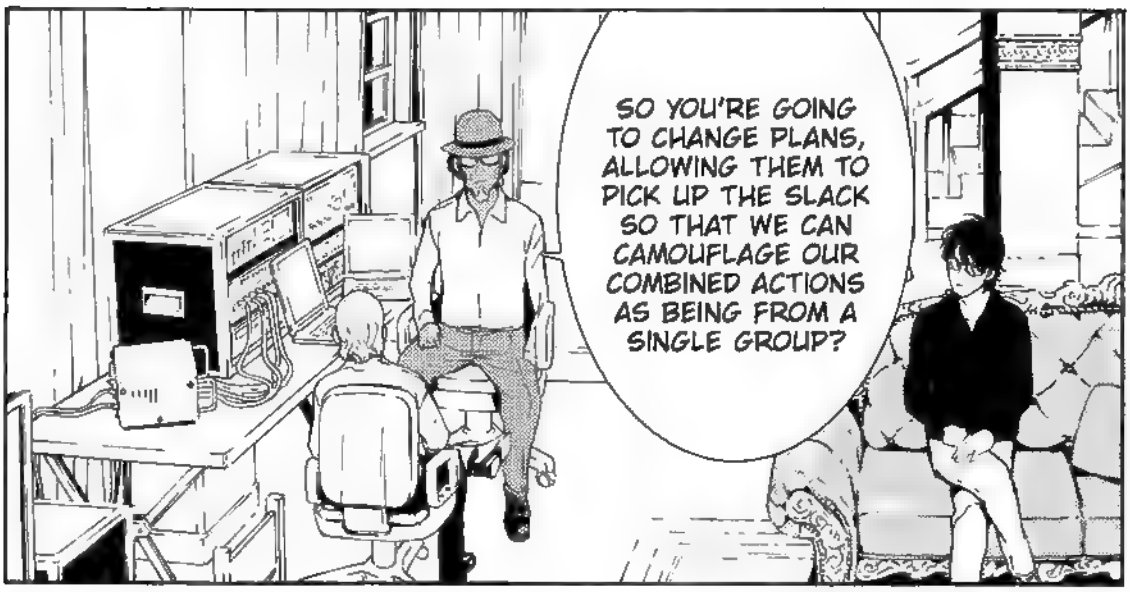
NA OKASHI
!?
!!
BANG
!!

DO
(BUT)
DO
DO
DO
DO
ボシュ
BOSHU
ボシュ
BOSHU
ボシュ
BOSHU
(BSHMP)

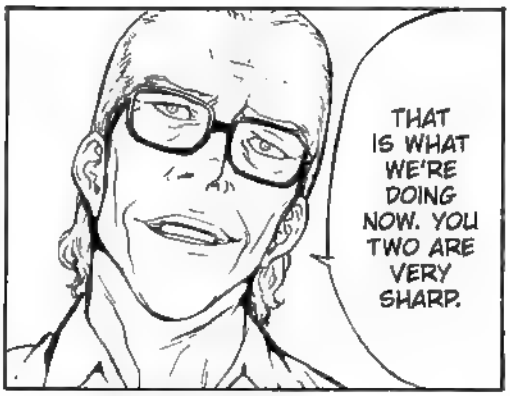
BUT WE HAVEN'T TAKEN OUT ANY—
DON (BOOM)
GA (GRAH)
PULL OUT!
SHUT UP! COMPLAIN TO OUR BRAIN TRUST FOR ASKING THE IMPOS-SIBLE!
THERE'S NO WAY FOR US TO COMPLETE THE MISSION! WITHDRAW NOW!!
BARA
BARA
BARA (BUDDA)

AND THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED?
OF COURSE.
KACHA (CLICK)
NO, IT'S FINE. THE COMMANDOS WILL MAKE UP FOR US.
COMMAN-DOS!?
THIS IS OUR THIRD TOTAL FAILURE. WITH OUR LACK OF RESOURCES, I'D THINK THIS IS JUST A WASTE OF VALUABLE TIME.
PRECISELY.
YOU MEAN HARUKA'S TEAM...THE ELEMENT NETWORK?

DOGA (THWAM)
TATAN (TAT-TAT)
DON (BLAM)
GOTCHA.
ZUZAZA (ZZREE)
DAI-SAN, CIRCLE BEHIND THE ENEMY AND STRIKE AT THEIR MAIN FORCE.

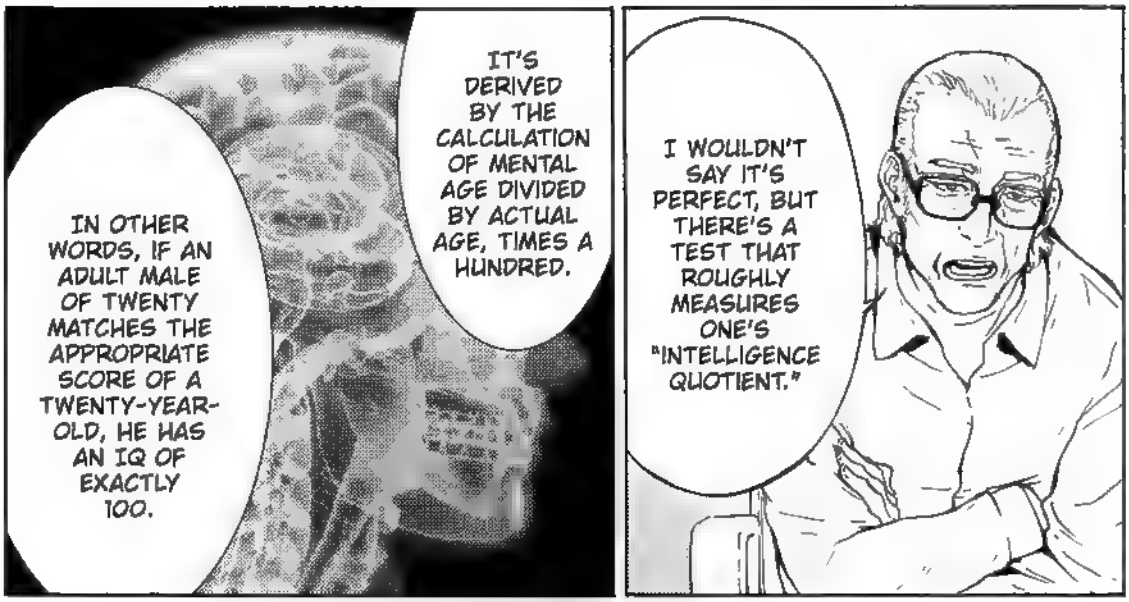

SO YOU'RE GOING TO CHANGE PLANS, ALLOWING THEM TO PICK UP THE SLACK SO THAT WE CAN CAMOUFLAGE OUR COMBINED ACTIONS AS BEING FROM A SINGLE GROUP?

SEEMS LIKE A PRETTY CAUTIOUS STRATEGY.

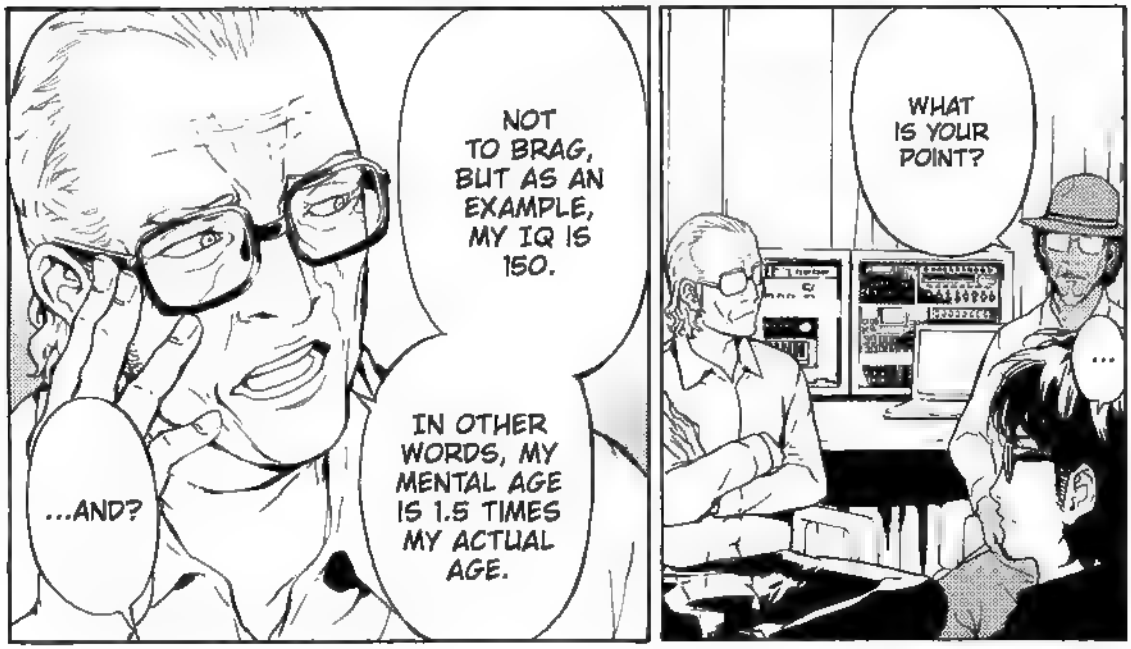

THAT IS WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW. YOU TWO ARE VERY SHARP.

...

THIS ZASHID GUY.
I'VE BEEN WONDERING IF THIS GUY'S REALLY WORTH ALL THE CAREFUL PUSSYFOOTING AROUND...


I WOULDN'T SAY IT'S PERFECT, BUT THERE'S A TEST THAT ROUGHLY MEASURES ONE'S "INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT."
IT'S DERIVED BY THE CALCULATION OF MENTAL AGE DIVIDED BY ACTUAL AGE, TIMES A HUNDRED.
IN OTHER WORDS, IF AN ADULT MALE OF TWENTY MATCHES THE APPROPRIATE SCORE OF A TWENTY-YEAR-OLD, HE HAS AN IQ OF EXACTLY 100.

THIS MEANS IT'S EASIER FOR CHILDREN TO SCORE HIGH NUMBERS.
IF A TEN-YEAR-OLD HAS A TWENTY-YEAR-OLD'S MIND, HIS IQ IS 200.
THE GAPS GROW AND SPIKE DURING THE DEVEL-OPMENTAL YEARS.


WHAT IS YOUR POINT?
...
NOT TO BRAG, BUT AS AN EXAMPLE, MY IQ IS 150.
IN OTHER WORDS, MY MENTAL AGE IS 1.5 TIMES MY ACTUAL AGE.
...AND?

ZASHID'S PRETERNATURAL TALENT MEANS THAT HE DOES NOT LIVE ON THE SAME SENSE OF TIME AS THE REST OF US.
HIS SENSE OF THE PASSAGE OF TIME IS TWO TO THREE TIMES QUICKER THAN OURS.
IN OTHER WORDS, TO HIM, A DAY FEELS LIKE IT IS NOT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, BUT SOMEWHERE BETWEEN FORTY-EIGHT AND SEVENTY-TWO.
IF YOU ASSUME THAT HIS MENTAL AGE IS THEREFORE ACCELERATED BEYOND HIS REAL AGE...
...THE MATH WOULD STATE THAT HIS IQ CONTINUES TO RISE WITH EACH YEAR.
IN FACT, IT WAS ZASHID WHO PROPOSED THE CURRENT TWO-STATE SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF GALBOA AND THE SUB-STATE OF DUHANA.
HE STRENGTHENS HIS OWN COUNTRY AND HIS OWN RULE WITHOUT THE BOTHER OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.
...
HE IS EXCEEDINGLY CLEVER.

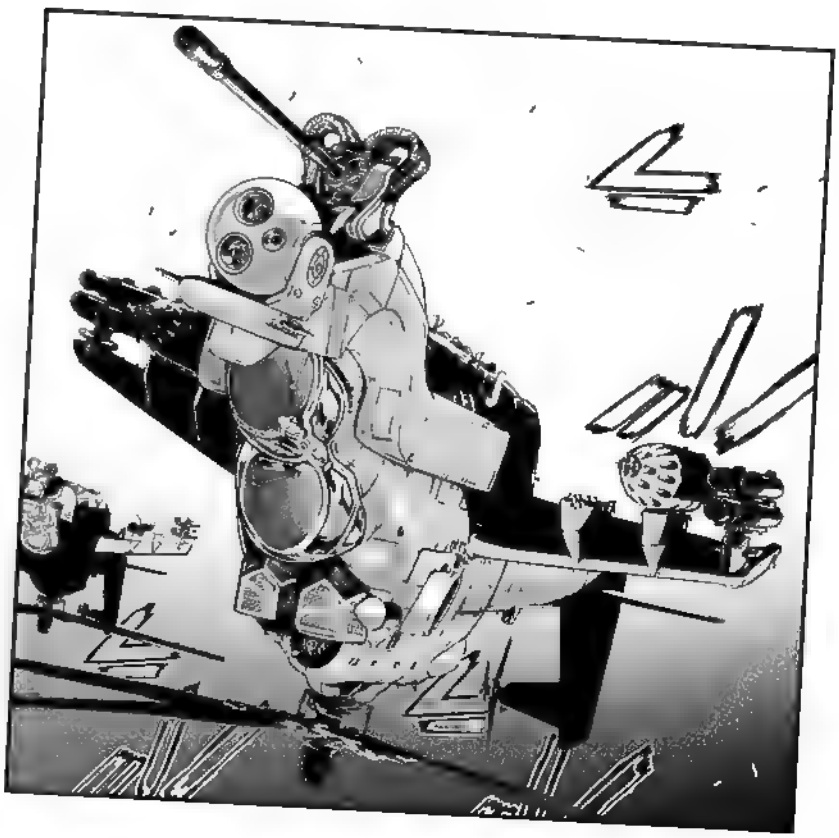
WHEN YOU WORK AS A CRIMINAL PLANNER, YOU RUN ACROSS TRULY TALENTED PEOPLE FROM TIME TO TIME.
THERE ARE SEVERAL IN THE UNDERWORLD I COULD NAME WHO I THINK HAVE EXEMPLARY MINDS.
AND HE IS SIMPLY OFF THE CHARTS.
NO AMOUNT OF CAUTION IS ENOUGH.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN... WITH YOU AND HIM?
...
...YES.
...ABOUT TWENTY YEARS AGO.

BEEP!
...
The guerrillas are currently on the run, located at—
The mystery group attacked our Muto base, but we defeated them.
WHAT?
Report for you, Colonel.

THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WIPE OUT THESE GNATS, SO HOW WERE THE GUERRILLAS ABLE TO ESCAPE?
IT MAKES NO SENSE... I HAD A MASSIVE SECURITY UPGRADE AT MUTO IN PREPARATION FOR AN ATTACK.
Yes, sir.
IT'S MEANINGLESS TO CHASE AFTER. HAVE THEM CLEAN UP THE GARRISON.
Sir?
DON'T BOTHER.
We've deployed a separate force to pursue.

EVERY ACTION REFLECTS THE COMMANDER'S THOUGHTS, QUIRKS, AND GOALS.
BUT THESE CONTINUOUS GUERRILLA ACTIONS ARE JUST A REPETITION OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE.
...THE ENEMY'S AIMS...
I CAN'T READ...
BUT WHAT IF THEY'RE ALL METICULOUSLY PLANNED ACTIONS BEING CARRIED OUT BY A CLEVER LEADER TRYING TO HIDE HIS TRACKS?
AT FIRST GLANCE, THEY ALL SEEM TO BE THE ACTIONS OF TOTALLY MINDLESS MEN WHO ARE SIMPLY GETTING LUCKY.
...ARE ONE MAN EACH IN THE AMERICAN, BRITISH, AND RUSSIAN MILITARIES...
IN THAT CASE, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST CHALLENGE I'VE FACED IN QUITE SOME TIME. THE ONLY PEOPLE CAPABLE OF PUSHING ME TO THAT POINT...
WHO DARES WINS

HEH HEH... VERY FASCI-NATING...
I'LL PRAY MY HUNCH IS CORRECT



Until
Death
do us
Part

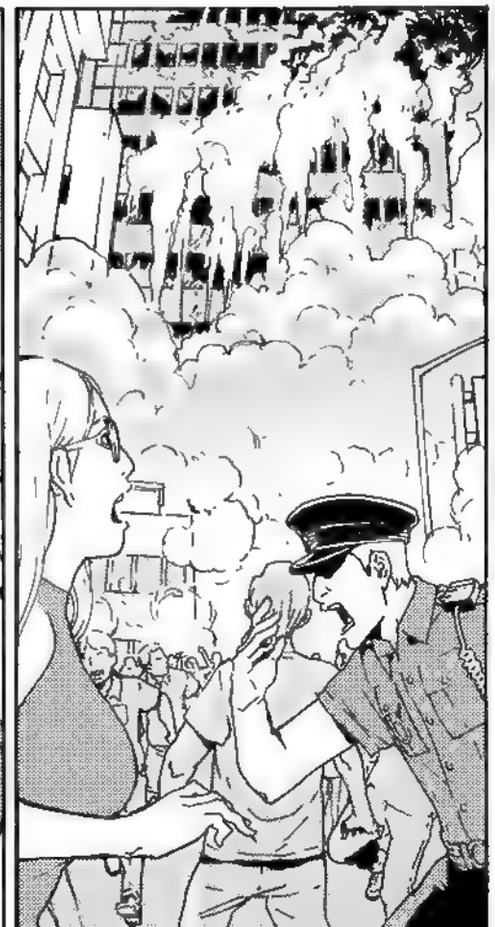
chapter 104

!?

ドッ
…

...
...YOU LOOK LIKE A RAY OF SUNSHINE TODAY...
GACHA (CLICK)
ガチャッ
WHAT'S UP?
THE TIME HAS COME TO MAKE USE OF IT.
I HAD ONE MOVE PLACED WELL IN ADVANCE.
KATA (TAP)
カタ
KATA
カタ

ドン
DON
(BOOM)



DON

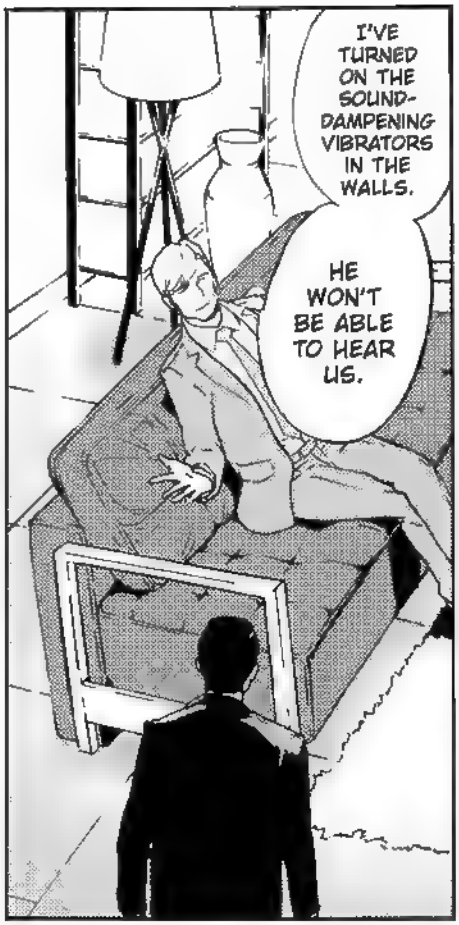
ドン
DON
(BOOM)
DON

...VICIOUS STUFF...

HAS EDGE LOST HIS MIND?
A TERRORIST BOMBING RIGHT IN THE CAPITAL OF GALBOA...
IT'S NOT EDGE...MY SON MIGHT BE AN IDIOT, BUT HE COULD NEVER DO THIS.
THERE'S TOO MUCH WASTED ACTION AND NO NEED TO NAME HIMSELF LIKE THAT.
IF HE WANTED TO REBEL AGAINST ME, HE'D SHUT UP AND GET ON WITH IT.
SO WHO IS IT?
I AM INVESTI-GATING.
GIRO (GLARE)
I'M CERTAIN I'LL FIND THE ANSWER VERY SOON, MR. PRESIDENT.

HAVE THE BOMB SCENE IDENTIFICATION SENT TO MY OFFICE.
AH, I SEE.
VERY REASSURING.
...SNIVELING WEASEL...
BATAN (THUMP)
IT'S ME. IS CATHERINE THERE?
SEND HER OVER AT ONCE.
BEEP!
BEEP!
DOSA (THUMP)

EVERY JOB OF MINE CAN BE DONE BY SOMEONE ELSE.
HMPH ...
DUTIES? WHAT DUTIES?
I'M JUST A FIGURE-HEAD.
ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)
CLICK
COME IN.


I'VE TURNED ON THE SOUND-DAMPENING VIBRATORS IN THE WALLS.
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR US.

CERTAIN *HE* WON'T HEAR US?

AND NOW I'VE GONE PAST THE POINT OF NO RETURN.

DO YOU THINK WE'VE WON WISEMAN'S TRUST NOW?

YOU YOURSELF CONTRIBUTED TO THAT ACT OF TERROR.
MOST CER-TAINLY.

YOU SENT ME OUT TO GALBOA AHEAD OF TIME TO CONTACT THE PRESI-DENT.
VERY SMART, PROFES-SOR.
LIAR... I KNOW YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT A WAY OUT FOR YOURSELF.
OF COURSE.
...AND BRINGING HIM TO OUR SIDE SUCCESSFULLY. SO FAR, SO GOOD...
... TAPPING INTO PRESIDENT HEITZMAN'S IDEALS AND UNHAPPINESS WITH THE PRESENT SITUATION...
ONCE I WIN HIS TRUST, WE CARRY OUT A SERIES OF TERRORIST ATTACKS...
BUT IF THIS MAN IS AS THE PROFESSOR EXPECTS, HE IS SOMETHING OF A LOOSE CANNON.
BUT THEN ZASHID ENACTED THIS TWO-STATE SYSTEM, WHICH HAS US SWIMMING BACKWARD AGAINST THE FLOW OF TIME!
I BELIEVE THAT WHEN SOUTH AFRICA REPEALED APARTHEID...
...GALBOA OUGHT TO HAVE FOLLOWED SUIT.

WHEN THE TIDE TURNS, POLITICIANS LIKE HIM WILL MOVE WITH IT.
WE JUST HAVE TO PIN HIM DOWN TO ENSURE HE CANNOT DO THAT. I ASSUME YOU KNOW HOW?
AND THAT MEANS WE CANNOT KNOW WHEN HE MIGHT TURN ON US.
——

...OF COURSE I DO...

DO YOU WANT SOMETHING, MISALT?

...

I DIDN'T CALL FOR YOU WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU ARE AS PERCEPTIVE AS EVER.
I CAME TO DELIVER A REPORT ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES THE ARMY IS HAVING WITH THE GUERRILLAS
AS I'M SURE YOU KNOW, DAD, MOST OF THE MILITARY BELIEVES THIS IS EDGE'S WORK
EVEN AS AN ENEMY, EDGE WAS ONCE AN HEIR CANDIDATE
YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE SOLDIERS WOULD BE HESITANT TO TAKE ARMS UP AGAINST THE TURUS FAMILY
SPEAK.

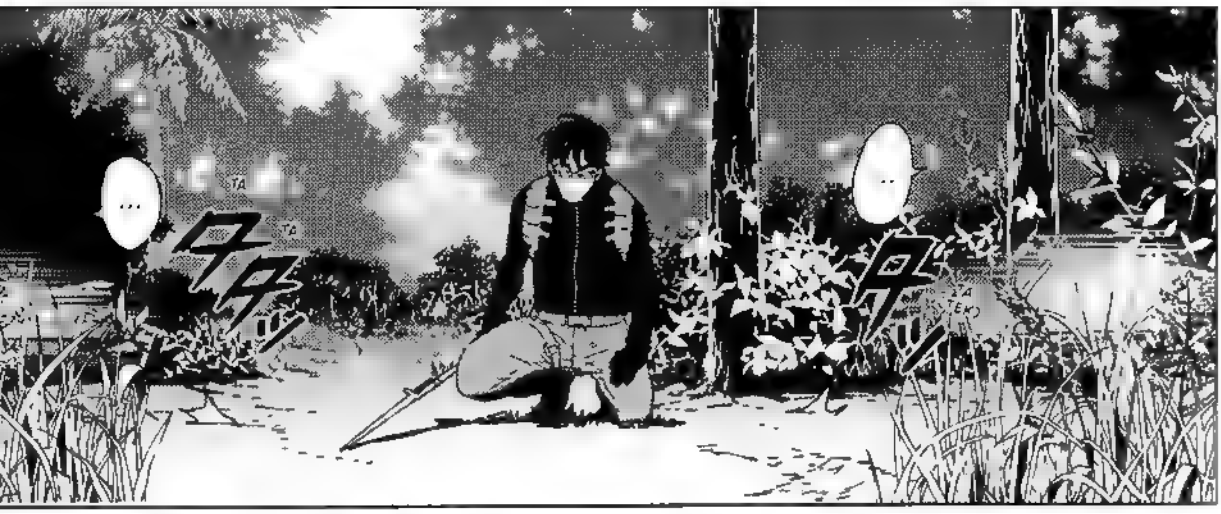
I WILL GO.
AND GIVEN THAT NOW TAUS HAS BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE ...
WHAT IS YOUR POINT?
VERY ASTUTE.
ARE YOU AFTER EDGE AND TAUS'S TERRITORIES?
THEN PERHAPS JUST THE SEASIDE...
HE MIGHT BE CAPABLE OF DRAWING MY MYSTERY FOE INTO THE LIGHT...
YOU WILL NEED MORE THAN ENOUGH POWER TO KEEP THEM AT BAY.
NO. YOUR OTHER BROTHERS WILL NOT ALLOW SUCH A BOLD MOVE.

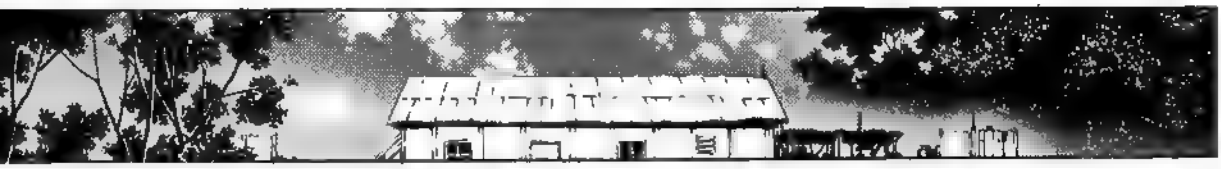
THANK YOU, PAPA.
VERY WELL. SUCCEED, AND YOU WILL BE GIVEN EDGE'S TERRITORY.
WE ARE FAMILY, BUT NOT A FAMILY.
WE ARE CONTESTANTS TO SEE WHO CAN LEAD THE TURUS FAMILY, AND FOR HOW LONG.
I DO NOT HAVE— NONE OF MY BROTHERS HAVE—THE SKILL TO SUCCEED IN THAT.
CALL ME THAT AGAIN, AND I WILL KILL YOU ON THE SPOT.

PARDON ME NOW.
BUT I DO FEEL CONFIDENT THAT I CAN BE THE GENERAL THIS COUNTRY NEEDS.
... MISALT ...
YOU ARE EASILY THE CRAFTIEST OF THE FAMILY...

YOU ARE NOT TO WIPE THEM OUT OR BLOW IT UP— SIMPLY SEIZE THE AMMO.
THIS IS SIMPLY A SMALL ARMS STOREHOUSE, THE KIND HIDDEN ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO FIGHT GUERRILLAS.
...I WILL ALLOW IT IF YOU DO NOT USE YOUR SWORD.
I'M OPPOSED TO YOU GOING OUT, BUT AS THE ONE BEST SUITED FOR THIS MISSION...
THE GUARDS ARE DUHANAN SOLDIERS, NOT GALBOAN, SO I'D PREFER IT TO BE QUIET, BUT IT'S SUCH A SMALL PLACE THAT EVEN INVISIBLE'S SNEAK ATTACKS WILL BE DETECTED BY THE OTHERS.

I KNOW THAT. BUT I AIN'T THE TYPE TO SIT BACK AT THE BASE ...
...WHILE OTHERS DO THE WORK.
スッ
THIS IS ONLY A REPLACEMENT, BETWEEN A SPEAR AND A NAGAMAKI.
IT MIGHT NOT BE UP TO THE TASK.
YOU SAID "FIVE TIMES" EARLIER.
HEY, ISN'T THAT...?
I TOLD YOU, THIS NAGAMAKI WILL HAVE TEN TIMES THE POWER IN MY HANDS.
YOU NEED TO CLOSE THE DISTANCE FIRST TO KEEP THINGS QUIET.
THEN, WHEN I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF IT... YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO, RIGHT?
TIBOR, INFILTRATE FROM THE RIGHT AND DRAW THE CENTER GUARDS' ATTENTION TOWARD THE REAR.
TEBOR, HIT THE FRONT AND NEUTRALIZE THE EXIT BEFORE THE FIGHTING STARTS.

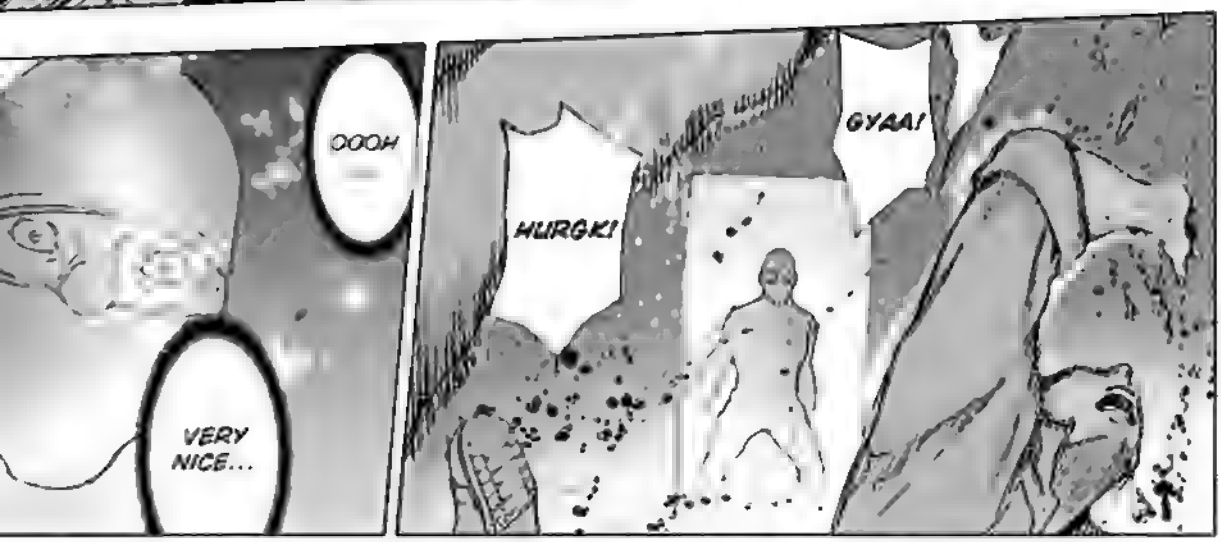

...
...
TA
TA
TA
TEK



URGH!
GAAH!
DOSU (SHUNK)
DOGA (THWAM)

RUSTLE
HUH?

TA
DOSA (THUD)

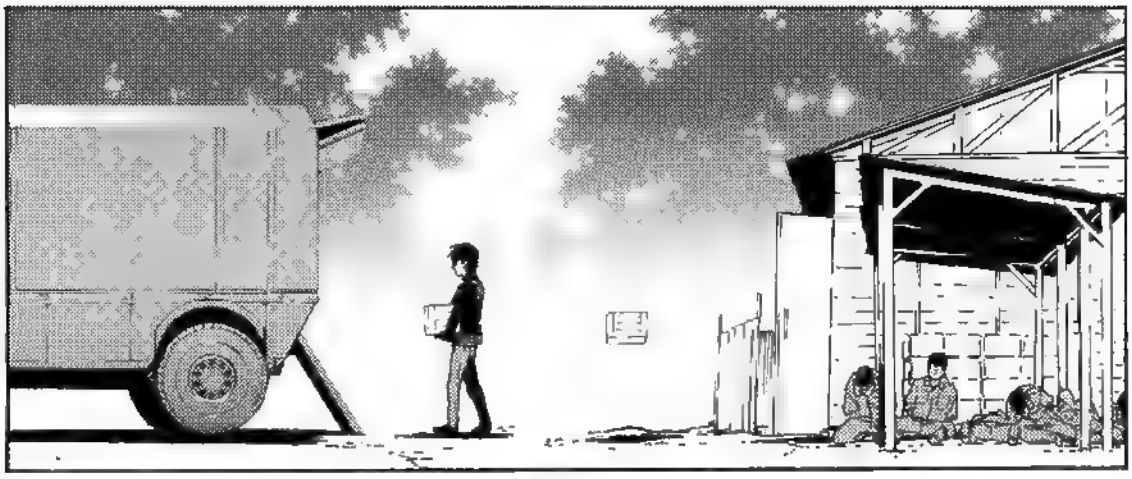

OOOH
VERY NICE...
HURGK!
GYAA!

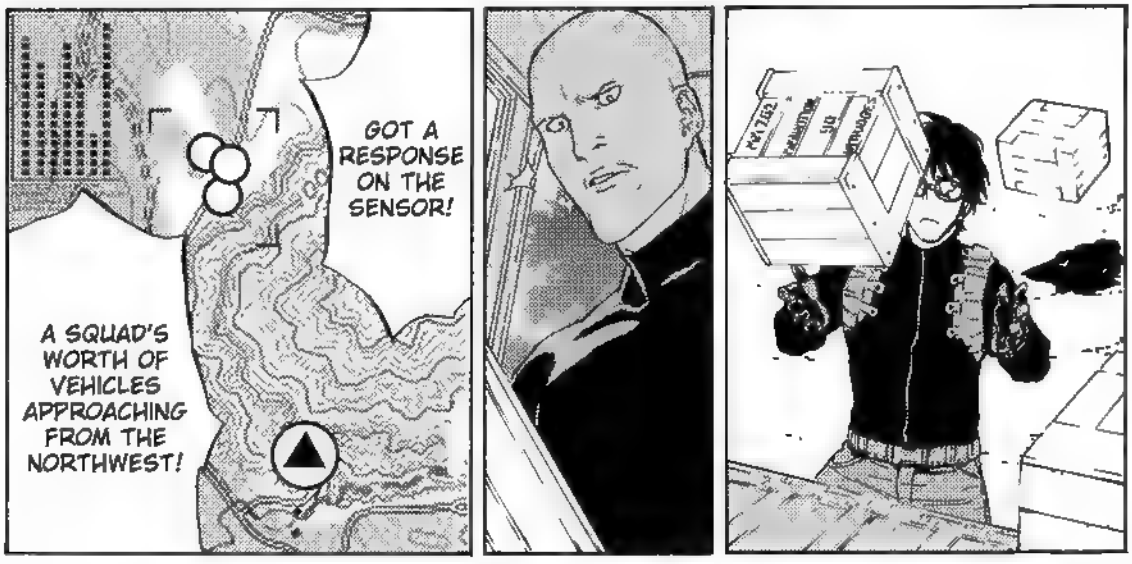
AAAH
...
ドサ

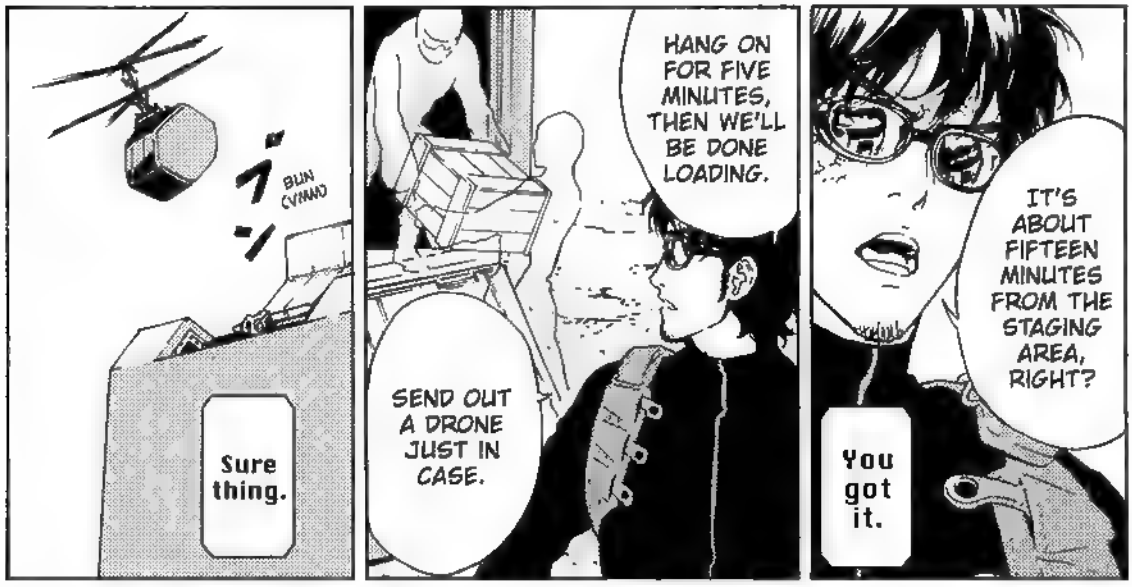
HERE IT IS.
KO'D AN ENTIRE SQUAD IN HALF A SECOND
BRING THE CAR AROUND.

THAT'S A BIT FAR
SIGNAL SENT, NO RESPONSE
82559
SEND THE SURROUNDING TROOPS ON THE DOUBLE TO BUY US SOME TIME

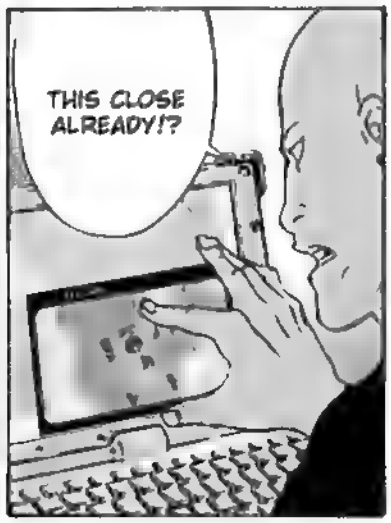
Until
Death
do us
Part




GOT A RESPONSE ON THE SENSOR!
A SQUAD'S WORTH OF VEHICLES APPROACHING FROM THE NORTHWEST!


BLUN (VRMM)
Sure thing.
SEND OUT A DRONE JUST IN CASE.
HANG ON FOR FIVE MINUTES, THEN WE'LL BE DONE LOADING.
You got it.
IT'S ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES FROM THE STAGING AREA, RIGHT?

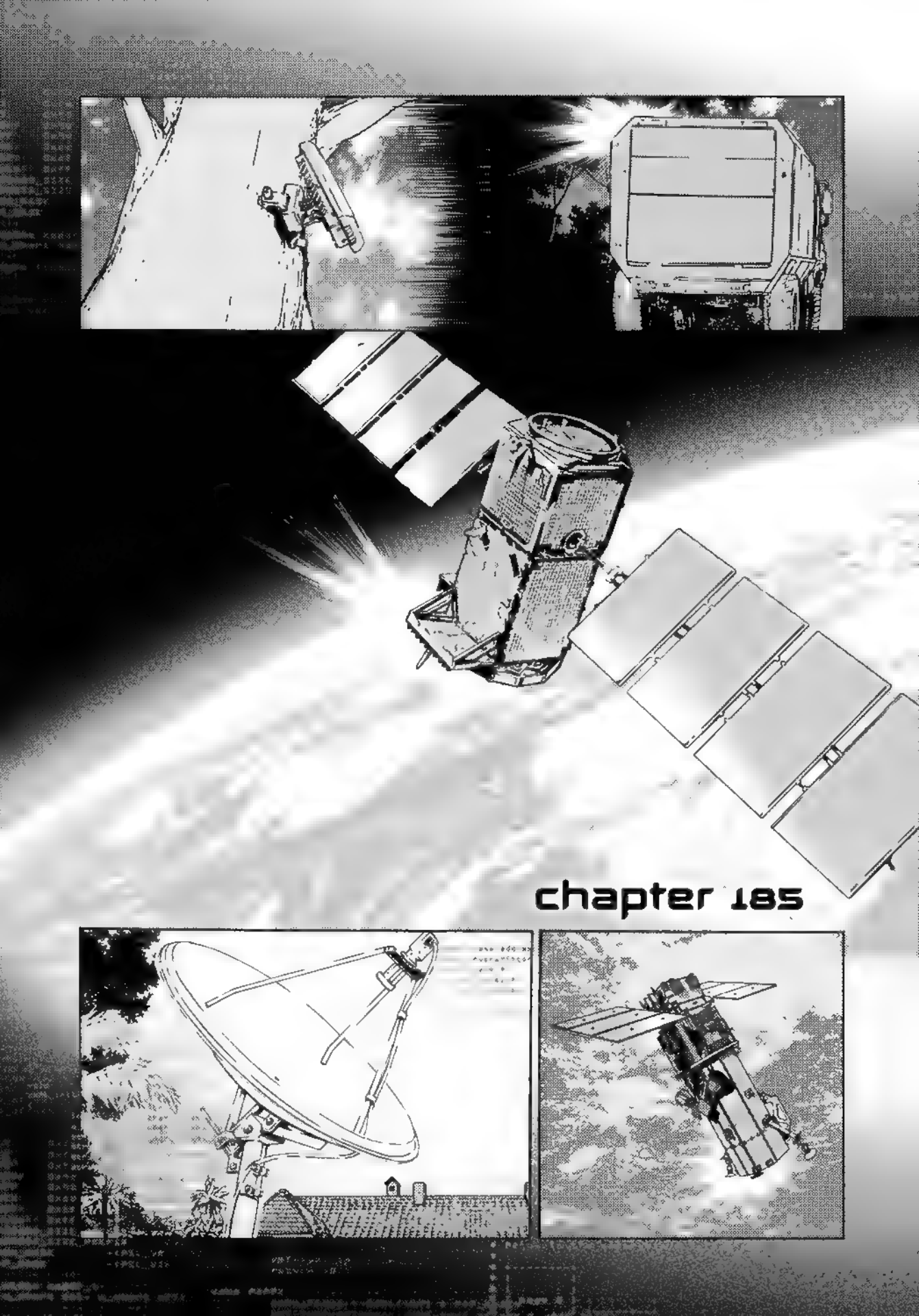
BLK HOT
!!
WAIT, THAT LOOKS LIKE...


THIS CLOSE ALREADY!?

HURRY UP! IT'S THE WHITE UNIT!!
YOU WON'T HAVE THAT EASY OF A TIME HANDLING THEM!

Hey, Samu-rai.
ALMOST DONE.

SO... THEY'RE THE GALBOAN VERSION OF THE BLACK UNIT?
KUI (NOD)
DA (DASH)
BUOOO (VRRRM)
DRIVE!
LEAVE THE DRONE CONTROL UP TO THEM. IT HAS PASSIVE COMMUNICATIONS, SO IT WON'T BE DETECTED.
I'M SHUTTING DOWN ALL TRANS-MISSIONS EXCEPT FOR CLOSE RANGE.
NO, WE NEED TO ALERT WISEMAN TO THE SITUATION FIRST.
ALL RIGHT, BUT THEY'VE GOT MORE MOBILITY THAN US.
AND KNOWING THEM, THEY'VE GOT AN AMBUSH WAITING.
WE WON'T BE ABLE TO SHAKE THEM.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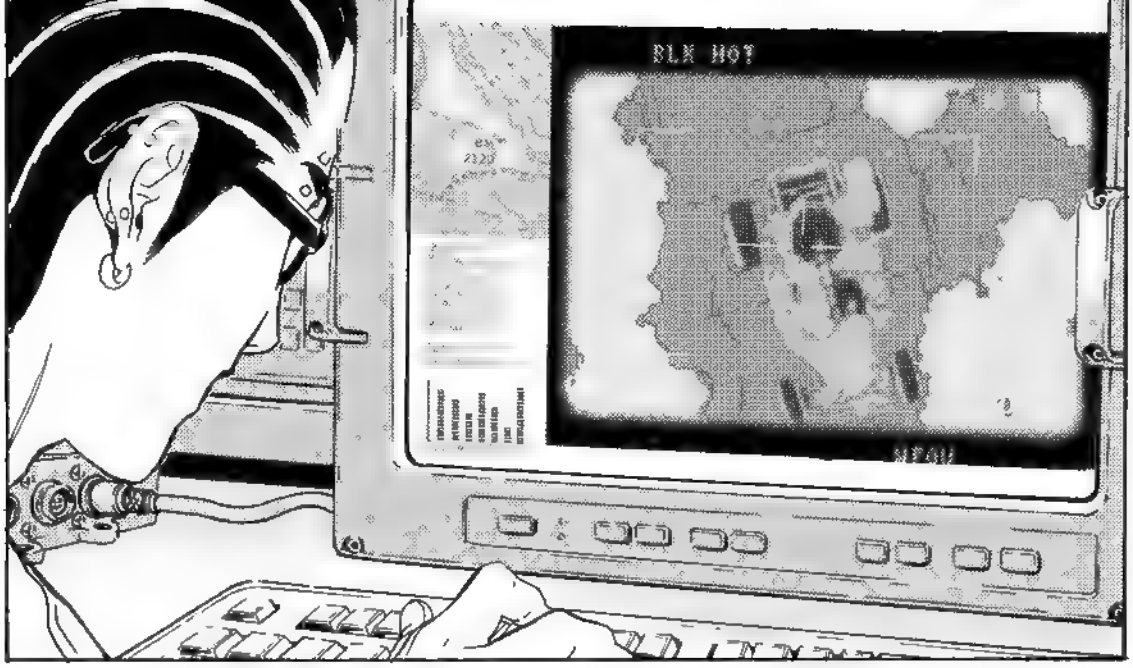
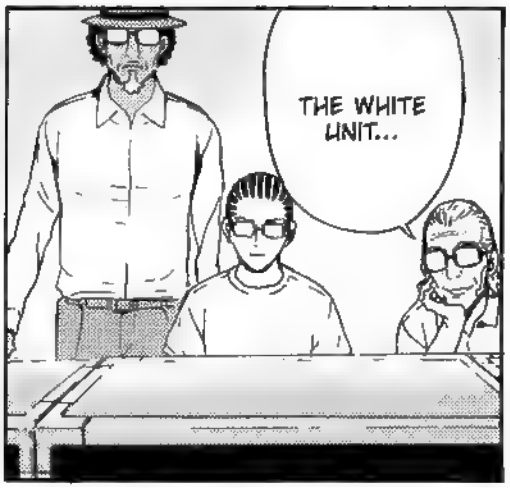
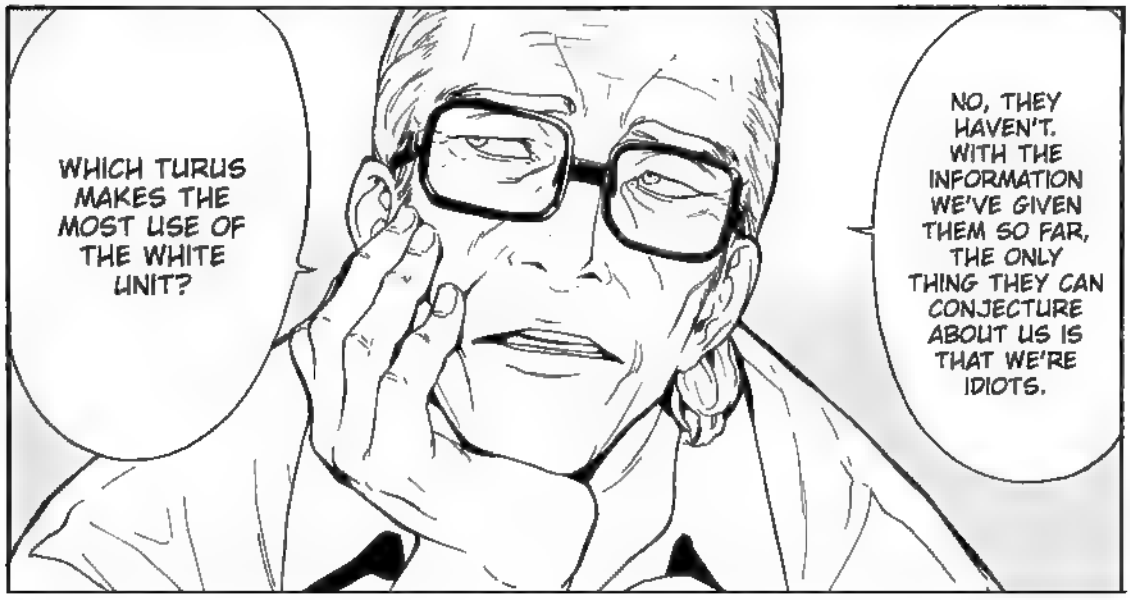

ELK HOT

HOW!?

HAVE THEY ALREADY SNIFFED US OUT?


THE WHITE UNIT...

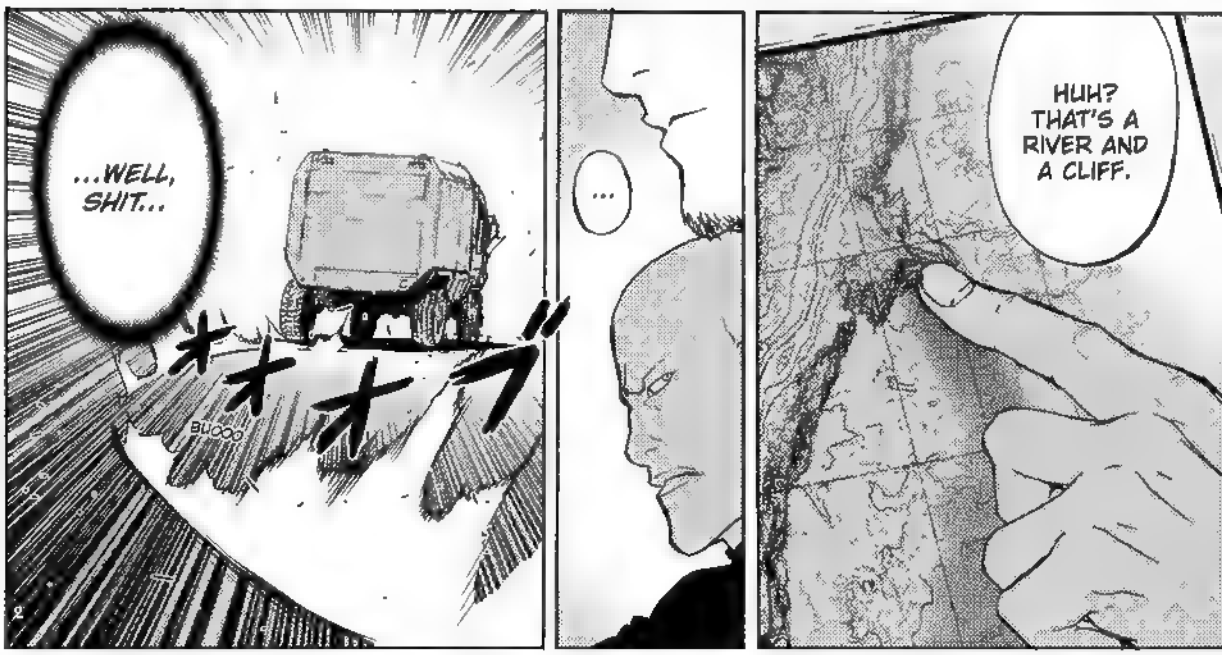

WHICH TURUS MAKES THE MOST USE OF THE WHITE UNIT?
NO, THEY HAVEN'T. WITH THE INFORMATION WE'VE GIVEN THEM SO FAR, THE ONLY THING THEY CAN CONJECTURE ABOUT US IS THAT WE'RE IDIOTS.

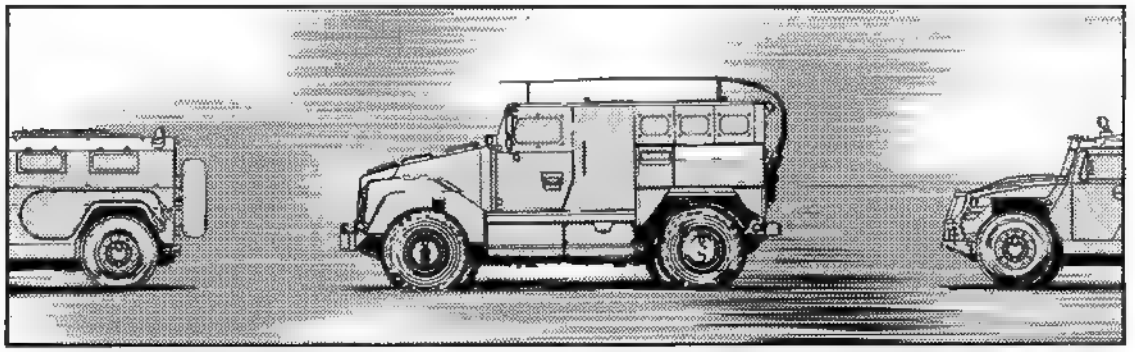
HE'S AN INFORMATION SPECIALIST WITH AN IQ OF OVER 200.
KATA (TAP)
HMM ...
PROBABLY MISALT.
IF HE THOUGHT TO PLACE A TRAP AROUND SUCH A TINY AND STRATEGICALLY INSIGNIFICANT AMMO DUMP...
...THEN HE'S VERY SHARP, INDEED.
IS THIS THE TIME TO BE IMPRESSED? IT MEANS BIG TROUBLE.
THAT'S JUST WHAT I WANT.
SEND SIGNAL J1435, IGAWA.
HUH?

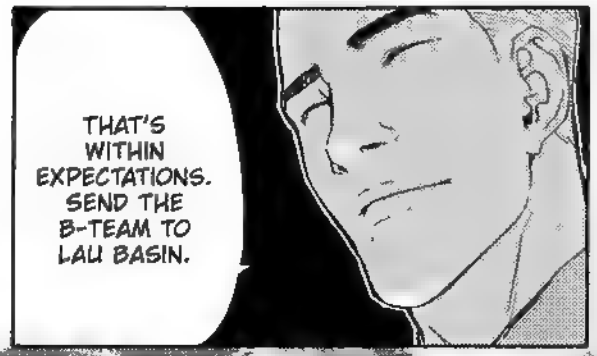
FIRST OF ALL, THEY'RE VERY UNLIKELY TO DECODE OUR SIGNALS IN THE MIDST OF AN OPERATION...
...BUT IF THEY RECORD THEM AND WORK HARD AT IT LATER, THEY'LL UNCOVER OUR IDENTITY SOONER THAN PLANNED.
REMEMBER HOW WE MADE IT POSSIBLE TO SEND VAGUE INSTRUCTIONS WITH MINIMAL TRANSMISSIONS FOR JUST THIS CASE?
HUH!? OH, RIGHT... BUT WHY NOW???
OF COURSE...
...GIVEN THAT WE'VE BEEN FORCED INTO THIS PLAN, THERE'S NO WAY TO STAY HIDDEN ENTIRELY.
!?
OH... RIGHT...
...
...I HAVE TO ADMIT THESE OLD GUYS KNOW THEIR STUFF ...
ONCE AGAIN ...

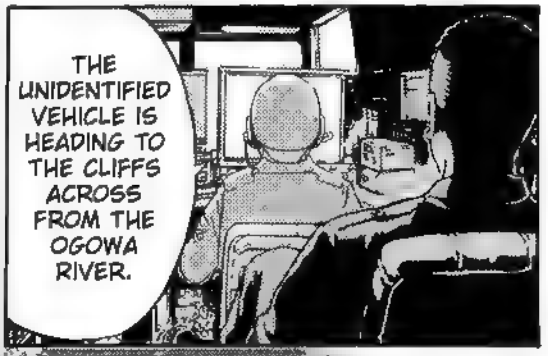
HMM !?
BLOOO CVRRRM
ブォォォ

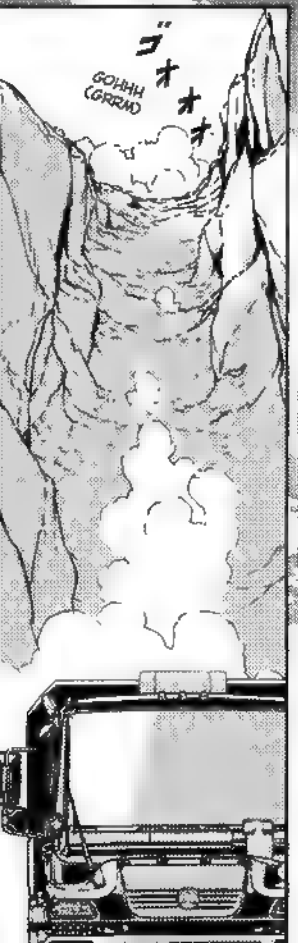
HEAD NORTH-NORTH-EAST, DEGA.
TIME TO CUT AND RUN.
WHAT IS IT!?
...

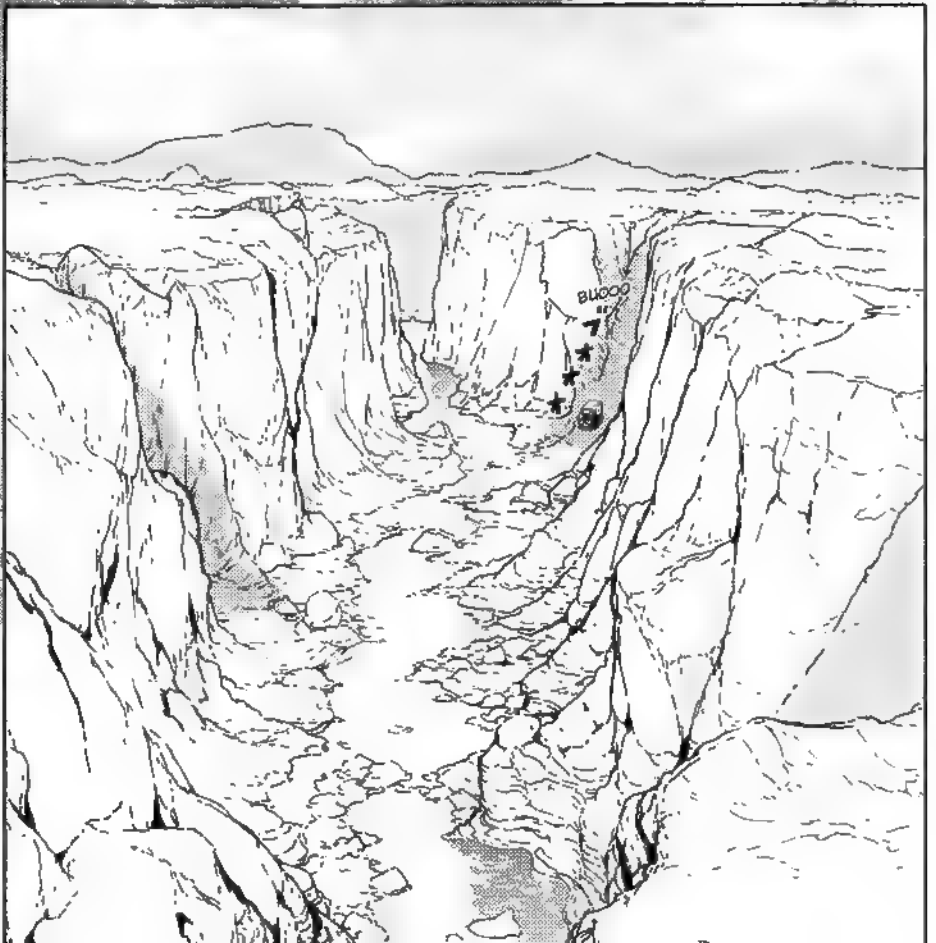

...WELL, SHIT...
ォォォブ
BLOOO
...
HUH? THAT'S A RIVER AND A CLIFF.




THAT'S WITHIN EXPECTATIONS. SEND THE B-TEAM TO LAU BASIN.


THE UNIDENTIFIED VEHICLE IS HEADING TO THE CLIFFS ACROSS FROM THE OGOWA RIVER.


ゴオオオ
GOHHH (GRRM)


BLOOO

BUOOO (VRRRM)
ゴオオ
オ

YOU MEAN THAT GUY EVEN KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT THE TERRAIN HERE?

THIS THING SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLIMB IT.

THERE'S A CLEFT ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE CLIFF.

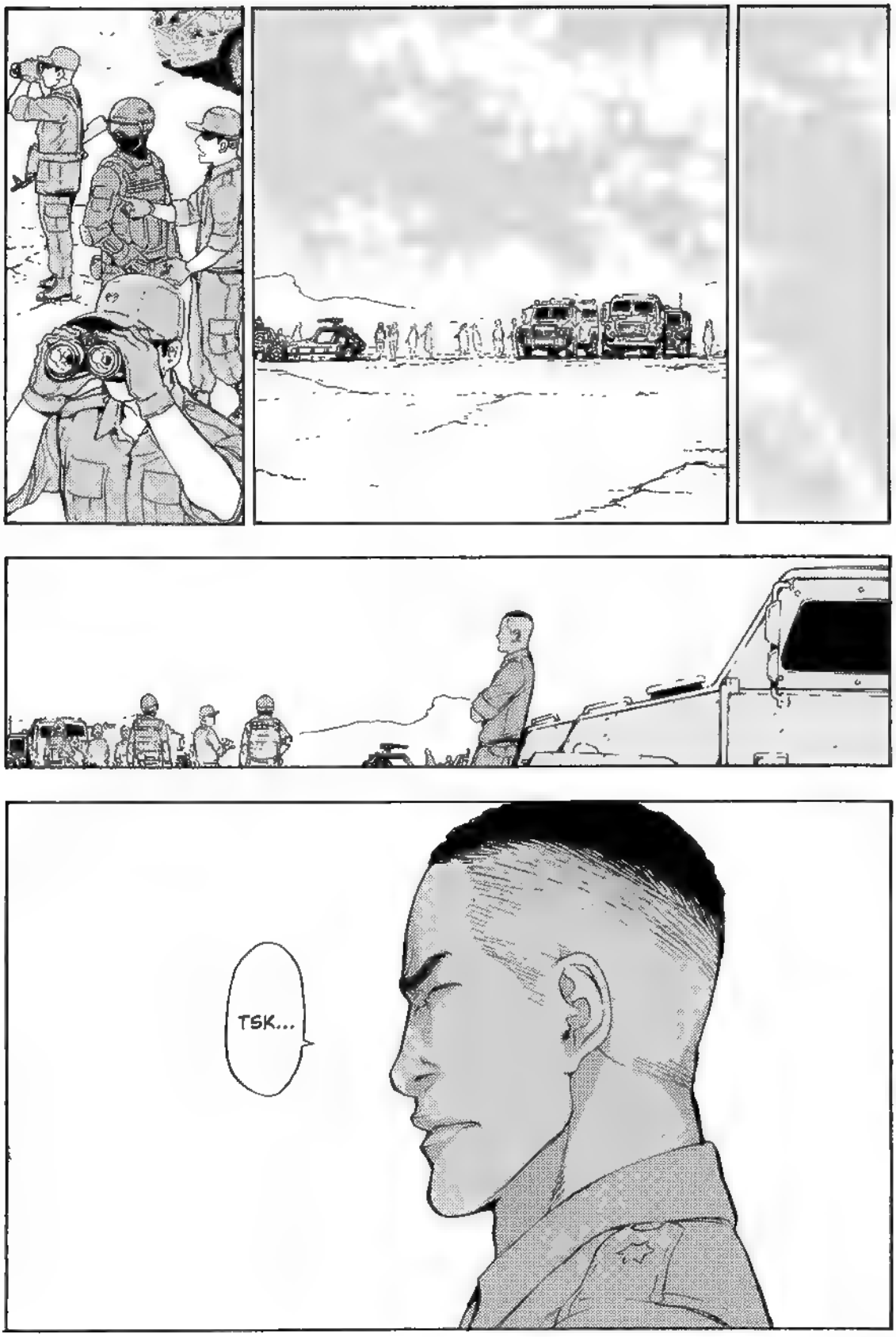
GA (GRUND)
GA
GA
GA
IS THIS GOING TO WORK!?
GATA
GATA (RATTLE)

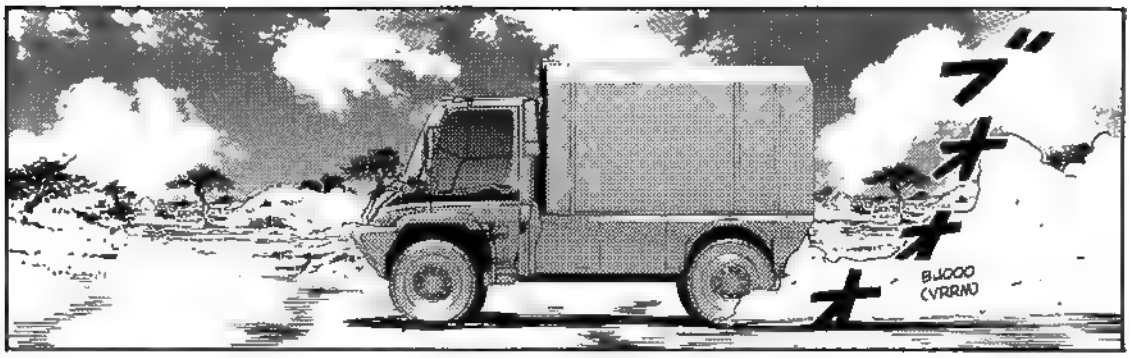
CAN'T THEY CLIMB THIS TOO!?
YEAH, BUT THEY CAN'T CHASE UNTIL WE'RE ALREADY AT THE TOP.
IF WE FALL BACK, THEY GET CRUSHED UNDER THE UNIMOG.
DO (BLAM)
DO
DO
DO
FIRE!
WE'LL GET A HAND FROM THE PROFES-SOR HERE.
WHAT?
GA
GA (GRAKK)
KAN
KAN (G)
TAN (G)

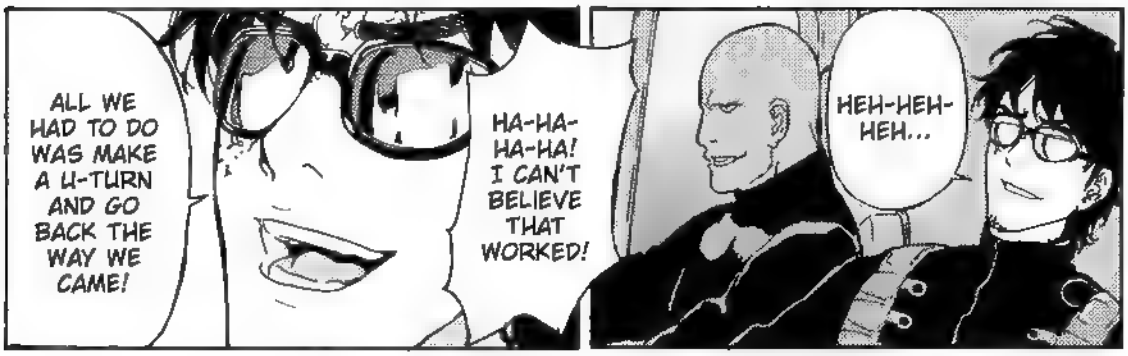
GUO (VRRM)
GARA (CRUMBLE)
GARA
BON (BOOM)
BON
BON
!?

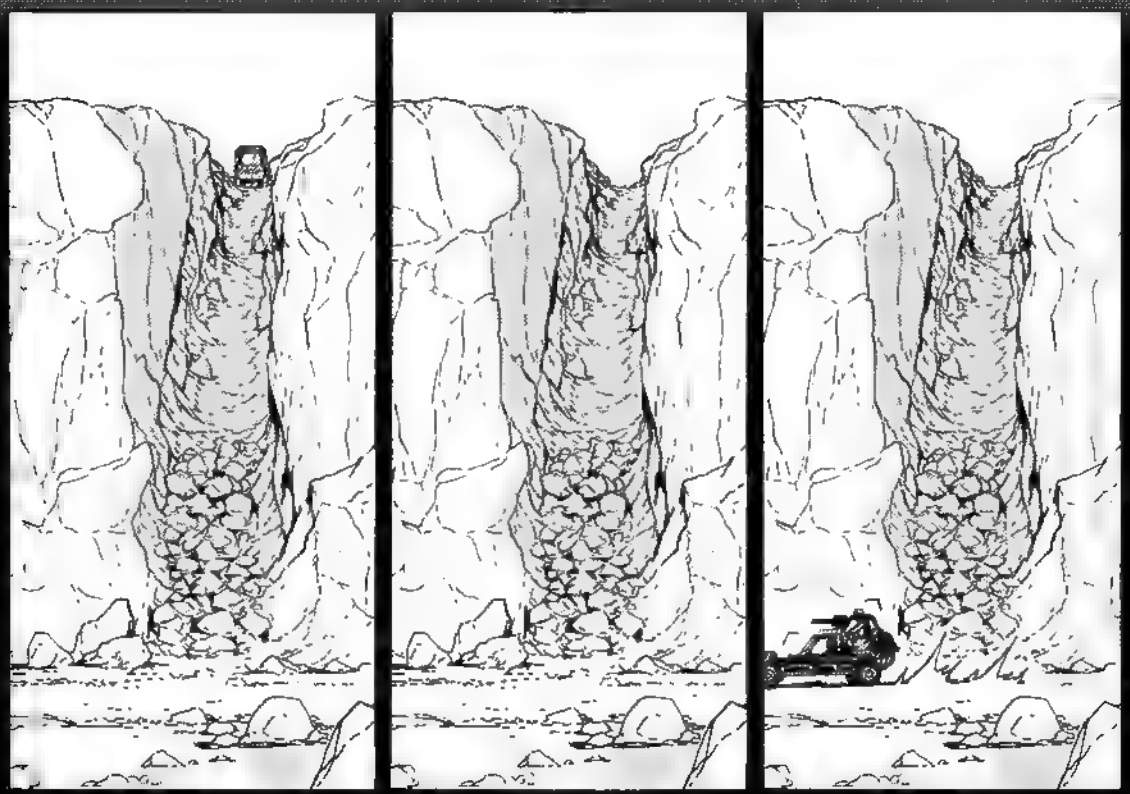
WE'RE BLOCKED OFF, MAJOR.
B-TEAM IS ALREADY AHEAD OF YOU. MEET UP WITH THEM AND WAIT FOR ORDERS.
YES, I IMAGINE SO. NO PROBLEM.
NOW THAT THEY HAVE SEALED THEIR OWN ESCAPE ROUTE, THEY'LL NEED TO EXCAVATE THE TERRAIN TO GET AWAY.
BUOO (VRRRM)

SO THEIR LEADER'S NOT SOME MINDLESS FREAK
THAT MUST MEAN THE OPERATIVES ARE BEING ENOUGH TO CARRY OUT THIS PLAN
BUT THEY ARE NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO ATTACK US IN OUR HUMANOID FORMS
THEY EVEN HAVE AN ESCAPE ROUTE TO ATTACK A SINGLE UNIT I CAN'T BELIEVE
SHOULD I GO AHEAD AND CAPTURE THEM?
OR LET THEM ESCAPE FOR NOW...?
MOVE THE COMMAND VEHICLE TOWARD THEIR HIDING AREA
YES, SIR.


TSK...


ブオオオ
BJOOO (VRRM)

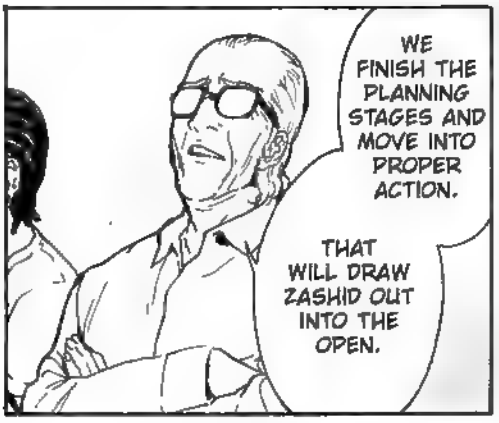

ALL WE HAD TO DO WAS MAKE A U-TURN AND GO BACK THE WAY WE CAME!
HA-HA-HA-HA! I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED!
HEH-HEH-HEH...



A NORMAL FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE COULDN'T DO THAT BUT THE ANIMAL'S ENORMOUS WHEELS GIVE IT SPECIAL CAPABILITIES
LOOKS LIKE YOUNG MISAL PRIORITIZED MOBILITY
AND DIDN'T FULLY ACCOUNT FOR THE TERRAIN-COVERING DIFFERENCES IN OUR VEHICLES

HE DOESN'T KNOW WHO WE ARE, BUT HE'S GRASPED THE EXISTENCE OF OUR "CONTROL TOWER."
BUT STILL, HE'S GOT A GOOD BRAIN.

CROSSING THOSE ROCKS IS A PIECE OF CAKE.
HE WAS THINKING TOO HARD ABOUT THIS.


WE FINISH THE PLANNING STAGES AND MOVE INTO PROPER ACTION.
THAT WILL DRAW ZASHID OUT INTO THE OPEN.

SO WHAT NOW?
Pre-cisely.

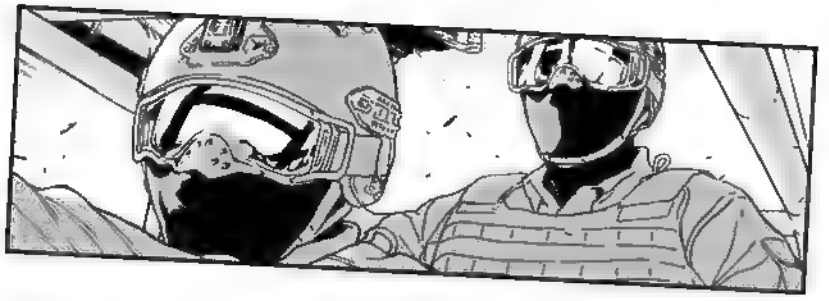
WHAT WE DID JUST NOW IS A CLASSIC CASE OF THE CLEVER FALLING FOR THE SIMPLEST TRAPS.

HOW?

AHH...
I GUARANTEE THAT HE WILL SEE THIS AS A CHALLENGE.

BUN (SHAKE)
ブン
ブン
WHOOPS... I FELL ASLEEP...
MUKU (RISE)
ムク
Good morn-ing.
UIII (VWEE)
ウィィィ
A-AND? WHAT HAPPENED !!?
!?
It seems that Blade entered battle with the White Unit last night.
I decoded the signal, but the instructions used random numbers, so I lack the data to analyze it.
I have deter-mined that he is safe.
GOOD MORNING, SPARC.
ANY NEWS?

...YES, I SUPPOSE SO...
What are our plans for today?
SPARC speaking
Their online communications are also intentionally vague, with the expectation that I would intercept them.
Wiseman is a very cautious individual.
WHEW.
...
WE'RE GOING TO NEUTRALIZE GIDO TURUS.
SPARC speaking
Yes, Miss Haruka.



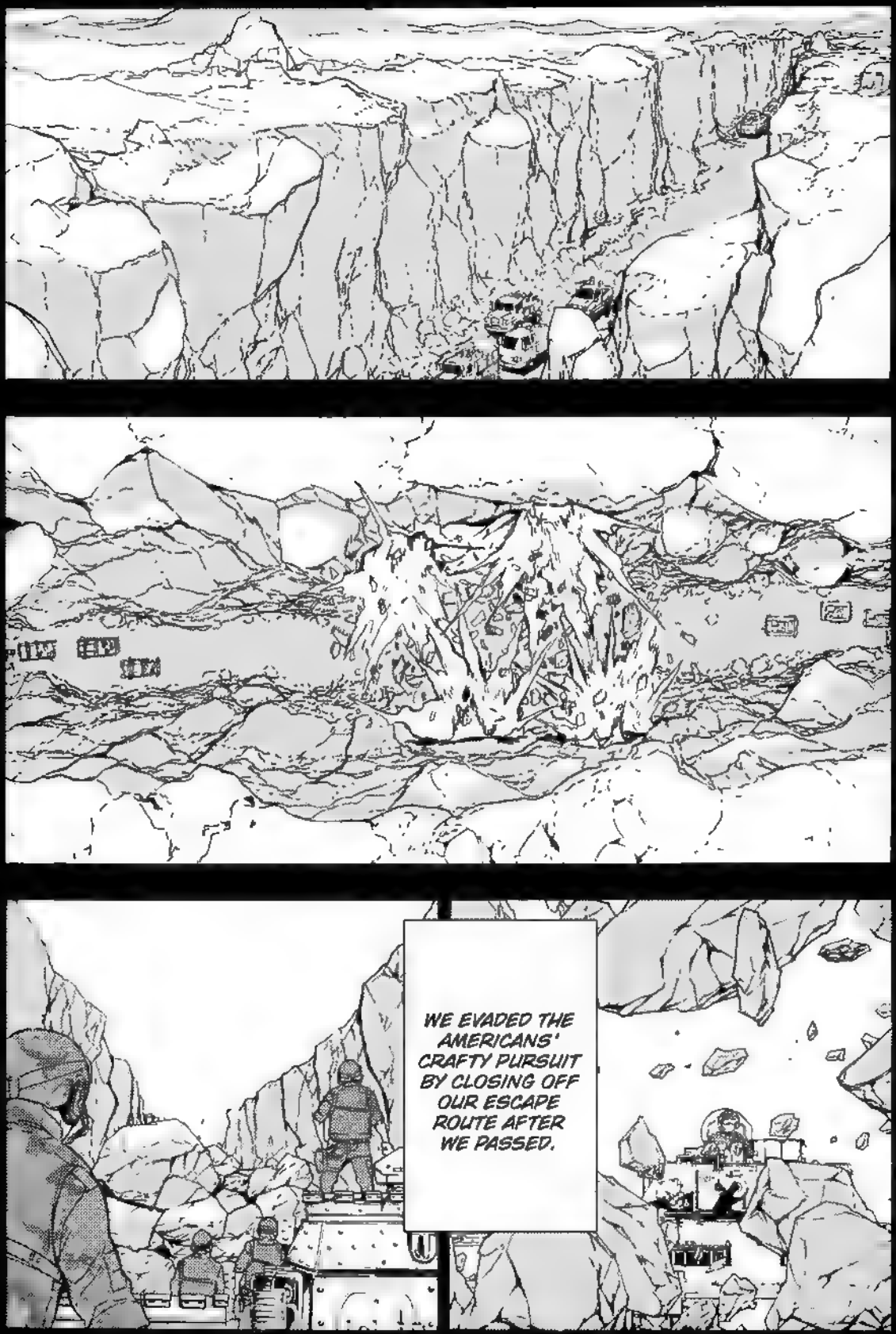
Until
Death
do us
Part

.....
...I SEE...
WELL DONE.
...you aren't going to punish me?
Um...

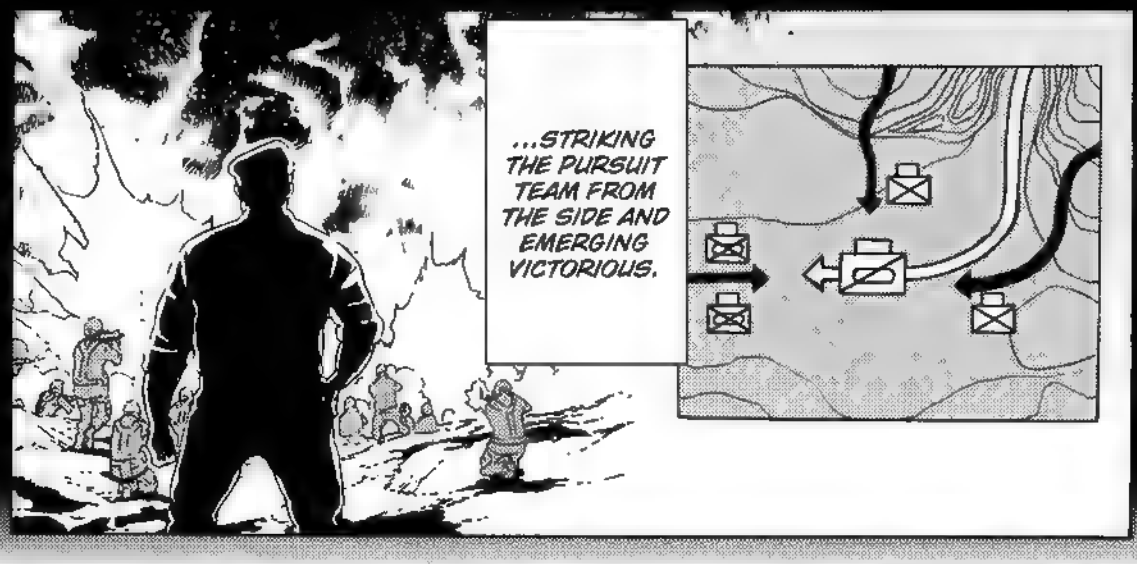
SIR...?
BUT I ONCE USED A QUITE FORCEFUL PLAN THAT WAS VERY SIMILAR.
YOU FELL FOR A VERY SIMPLE TRICK WHICH IS MOST EFFECTIVE AGAINST MEN LIKE YOU.
ABOUT TWENTY YEARS AGO, THE AMERICANS SENT SOME TROOPS INTO OUR COUNTRY ON A TOP SECRET MISSION.
THE ENEMY WAS BIDING ITS TIME. THEIR PLAN WAS A SUCCESS...
...AND OUR FORCES WERE RE-TREATING.
BUT I BELIEVE THAT IT WAS SECRETLY VENGEANCE FOR THE MASS KILLING OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS I ONCE ENGAGED IN YEARS BEFORE.
THE OUTWARD REASON WAS PROBABLY TO PUNISH US FOR IGNORING ALL OF THE WARNINGS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SENT, TARNISHING THEIR PRIDE.

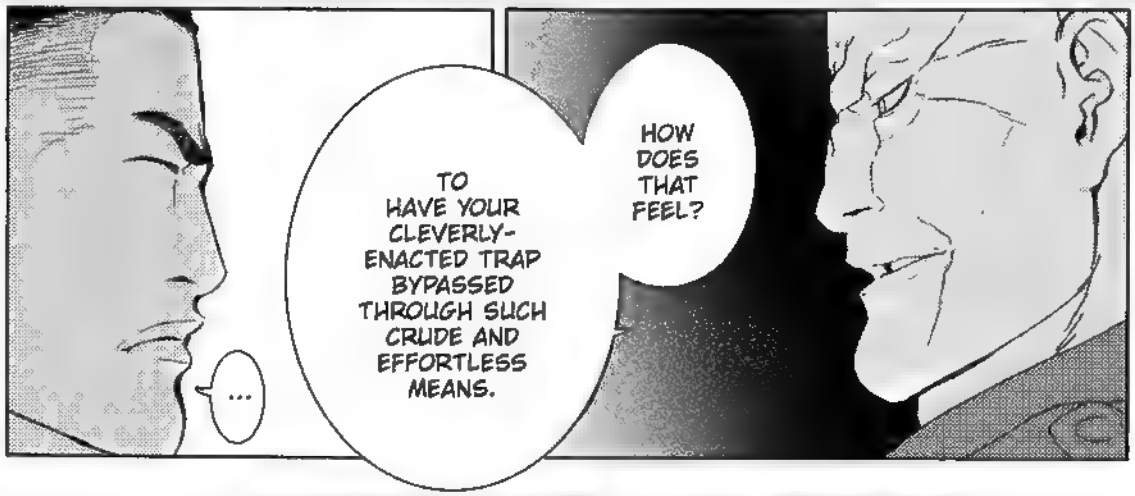
I DID NOT KNOW WHO WAS DRAFTING PLANS OR GIVING ORDERS, BUT HE ADEPTLY SPLIT OUR FORCES BY ADAPTING IN REAL TIME...
chapter 186

...AND WITH OUR LACK OF FIREPOWER, WE WERE FORCED TO FLEE.


WE EVADED THE AMERICANS' CRAFTY PURSUIT BY CLOSING OFF OUR ESCAPE ROUTE AFTER WE PASSED.

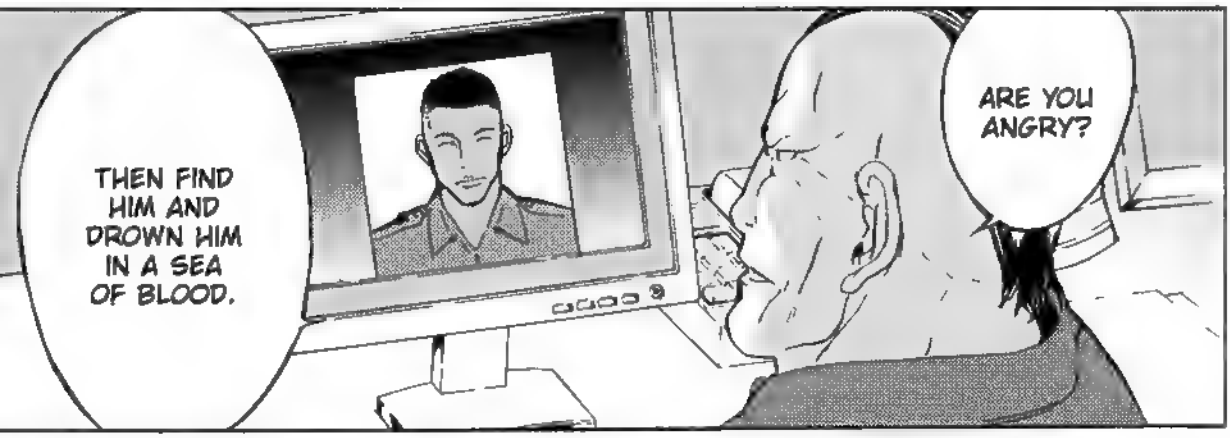
THEY SOON GAVE UP AND SWITCHED TO PURSUING ANOTHER UNIT, WHICH WAS THE NATURAL CHOICE.
BUT WE ABANDONED OUR VEHICLES AND HEADED BACK AFTER THEM ON FOOT...


...STRIKING THE PURSUIT TEAM FROM THE SIDE AND EMERGING VICTORIOUS.


HOW DOES THAT FEEL?
TO HAVE YOUR CLEVERLY-ENACTED TRAP BYPASSED THROUGH SUCH CRUDE AND EFFORTLESS MEANS.
...

I'M CERTAIN *HE* FELT INSULTED IN THE SAME WAY.
THAT IS YOUR WEAKNESS. SUCH TRICKS ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE ESPECIALLY CLEVER.

THANKS TO YOU, WE HAVE A GLIMPSE OF THE ENEMY.
WELL DONE. WE WILL NEED TO DOUBLE OUR CAUTION WITH THIS ONE.

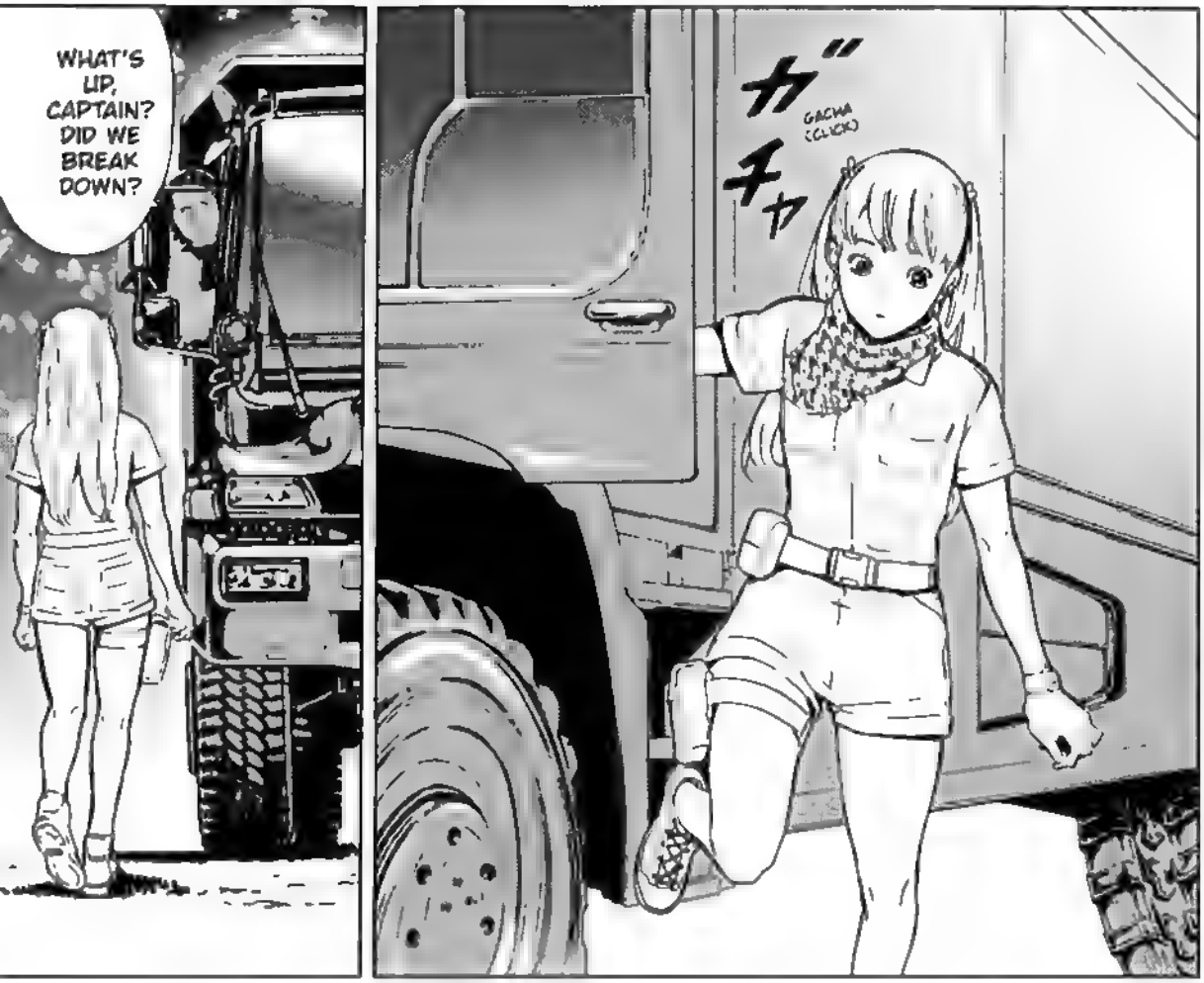

ARE YOU ANGRY?
THEN FIND HIM AND DROWN HIM IN A SEA OF BLOOD.

...I understand, sir.
You have my word...

BUT THE ENEMY HAS RESEARCHED ME WELL, AND THEY HAVE THE COURAGE TO CARRY OUT THESE SEEMINGLY STUPID GAMBITS.
IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT BE EASY TO DEAL WITH.
HEH HEH HEH.
FU (FFT)
NOW I WILL SEE HOW WELL YOU REACT ...
...TO SUCH A TRICKY, UNPREDICT-ABLE FOE, MISALT.

BLOOD (VROOM)
ブオオオ

KIKI (SCREECH)
キキッ


WHAT'S UP, CAPTAIN? DID WE BREAK DOWN?
GACHA (CLICK)
ガチャ

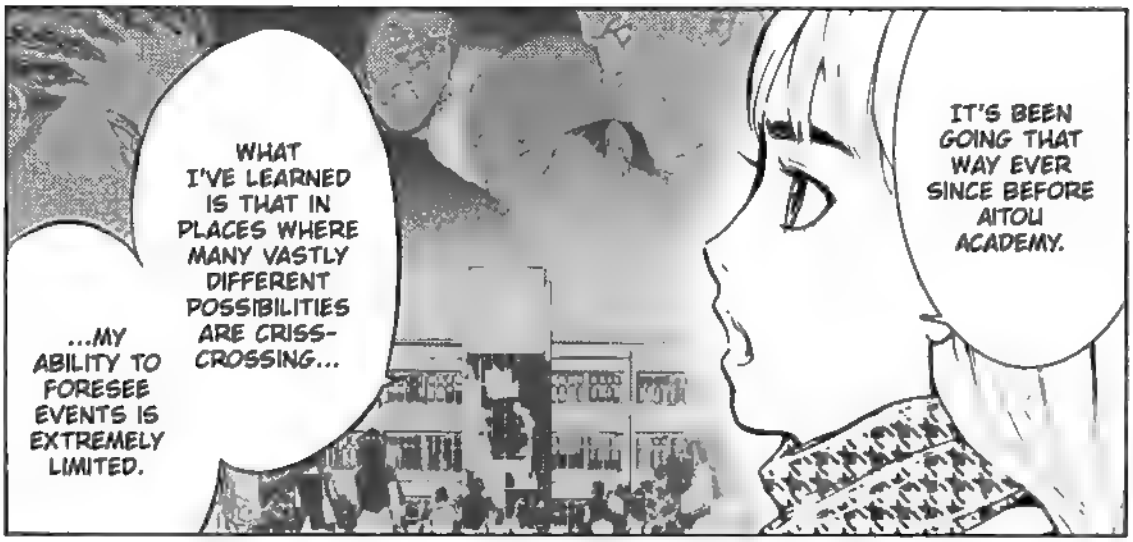
WE ARE ABOUT TO ENCOUNTER AN UNEXPECTEDLY POWERFUL ENEMY.
!?
AW, REALLY!?
IF YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THIS, IS THERE NO WAY TO AVOID THEM?
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE. THEY HAVE A NET CAST VERY HEAVILY AROUND THE SURROUNDING AREA.
NO MATTER WHERE WE GO, THEY WILL CATCH US.

GACHA CLICK?
YES.
...I SEE...
THEN WE OUGHT TO FIND THE MOST AD-VANTAGEOUS SPOT TO FIGHT.
IN ORDER TO KEEP THE UNIT FRESH, WE WILL NEED THE LIBERATION FRONT...
...TO BUY THEMSELVES DISTANCE WHILE WE FIGHT.
I HAVE NO OPPOSITION TO THIS PLAN, BUT IT DOES US NO GOOD TO BE DEFEATED HERE.
SHOULDN'T WE FIGHT WITH ALL OF OUR FORCES TO ENSURE VICTORY?
NICE MOVE...SO WE PLAY DECOY.

NO, WE SHOULD NOT.
REMEMBER, OUR GOAL HERE IS NOT TO DEFEAT OUR ENEMY.
BRILLIANTLY SAID, MISTRESS.
I'M GOING TO SPREAD THE WORD TO THOSE IN THE BACK.

WHO?
SO...IT'S MISALT...
ZASHID'S SON, TOP OFFICER OF THE INTELLIGENCE BUREAU. HE'S GOOD AT ISOLATING YOUR WEAKNESSES LIKE THIS.
HE COULD BE THE TRICKIEST OF ALL THEM, OUTSIDE OF ZASHID.
BUT...
...AND THEN GIDO— A TWO-PART TURUS BATTLE.
SO WE MIGHT END UP FIGHTING HIM...

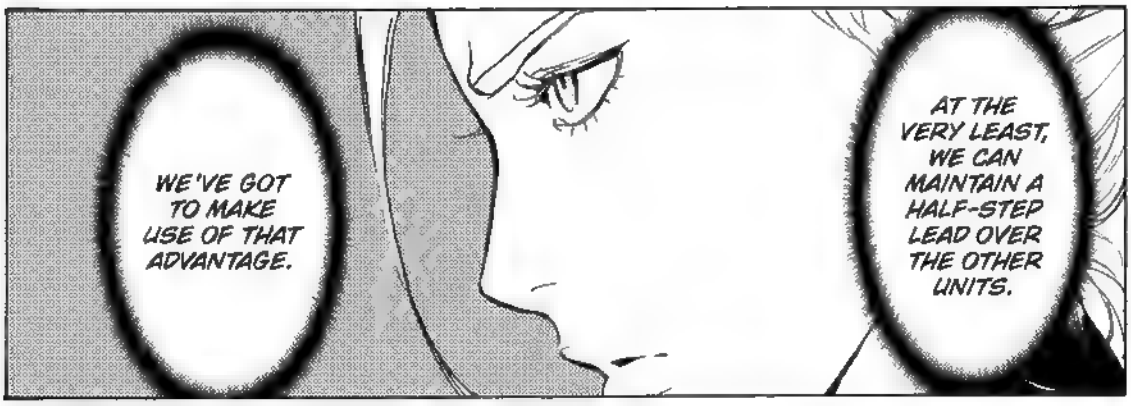
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
WHO KNOWS?
???
UH, NEVER MIND.
...CAN WE WIN?
WHAT HAPPENED? HAS SOMETHING CHANGED IN YOU SINCE WE WERE IN JAPAN!?
WELL, ACTUALLY ...
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
...I CAN'T SEE ANY ANSWERS REGARDING THAT...


IT'S BEEN GOING THAT WAY EVER SINCE BEFORE AITOU ACADEMY.
WHAT I'VE LEARNED IS THAT IN PLACES WHERE MANY VASTLY DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES ARE CRISS-CROSSING...
...MY ABILITY TO FORESEE EVENTS IS EXTREMELY LIMITED.

THE STRONG THOUGHTS AND DEEDS OF VARIOUS PEOPLE HAVE A MAJOR EFFECT ON CHANGING POSSIBILITIES.
THAT'S JUST WHAT BATTLE-GROUNDS ARE LIKE TO BEGIN WITH.
...

WHEN IT COMES TO MAMORU-SAN, THAT STRATEGIST NAMED WISEMAN CHANGES FLUIDLY ON THE SPOT...
...ALTERING THEIR TACTICS AS THE CONDITIONS CHANGE.

IF IGAWA WERE HERE, HE'D EXPLAIN IT THROUGH QUANTUM THEORY OR WHATEVER...
EITHER WAY... IT'S A BAD SITUATION.
IT MAKES ME THINK THAT MY CURRENT PREDICTIVE ACCURACY IS LESS THAN HALF...

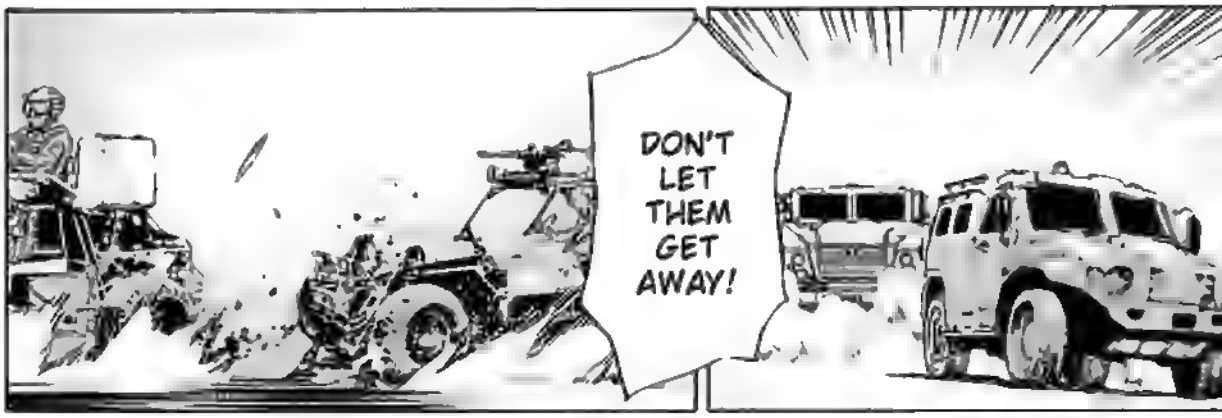

WE'VE GOT TO MAKE USE OF THAT ADVANTAGE.
AT THE VERY LEAST, WE CAN MAINTAIN A HALF-STEP LEAD OVER THE OTHER UNITS.

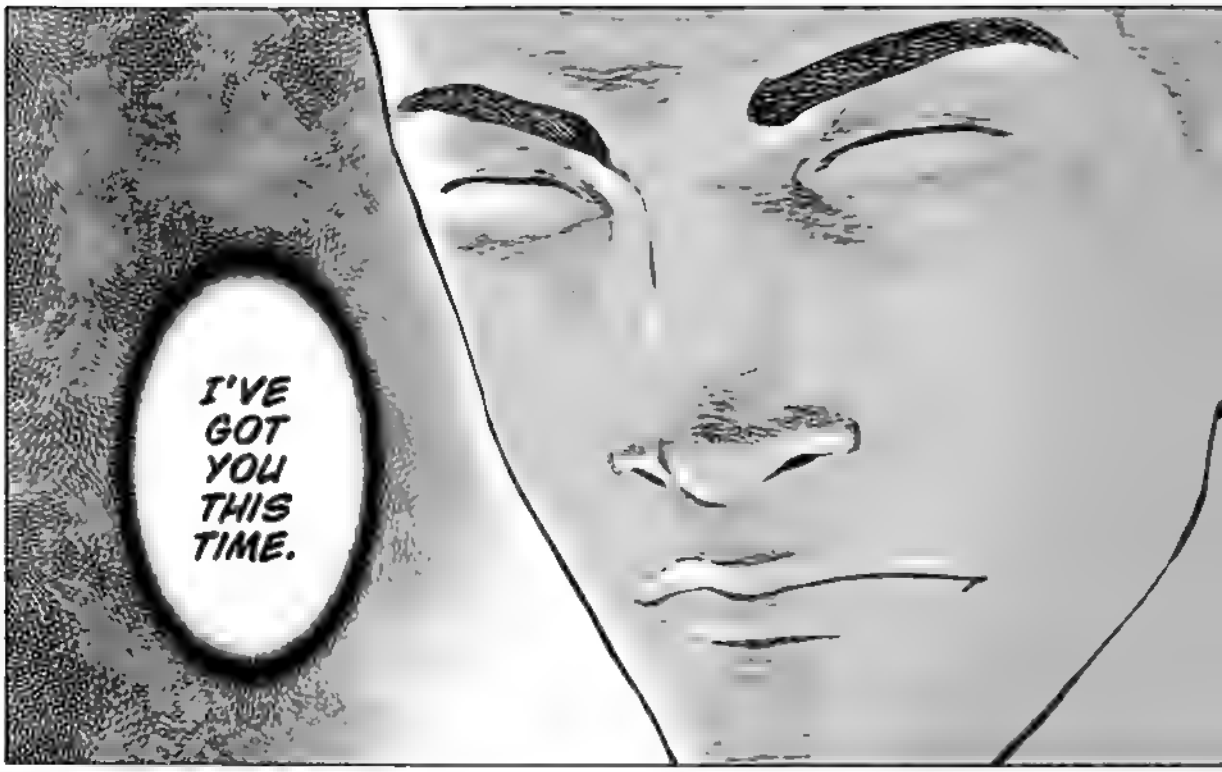
BA (BRUMM)
BA
BA
BA

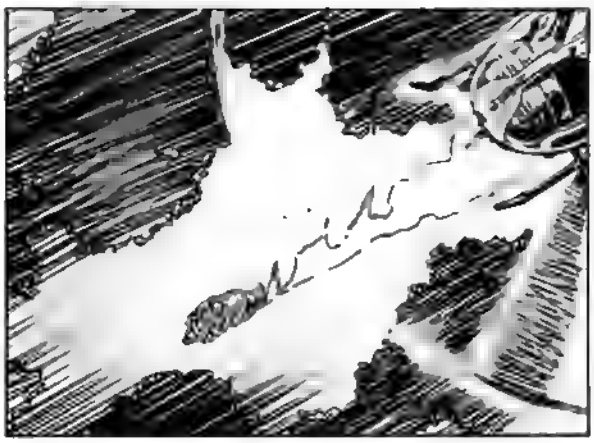
BEEP!
OKAY. THE PLAN'S IN MOTION, THEN.
SPARC: SPEAKING
The sensor just picked you up.
IT'S MOVING TOWARD THE MOUNTAINS.
METALLIC REACTION TO EAST-SOUTHEAST.
ALERT TO ALL UNITS.
PROCEED TO LOCATION AND WAIT FOR TARGET CONFIRMA-TION.
SEND CHOPPERS TO CONFIRM.

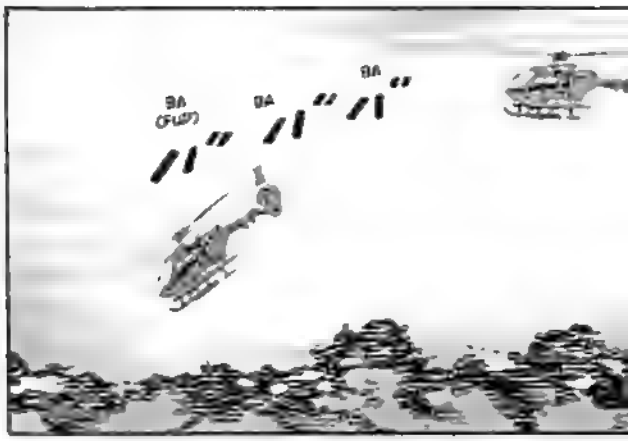
BA
BA
BA
BA (FUP)
THERE THEY ARE.
Yes, Dai.
An EC635— one machine gun on either side for defense.
BA
BA
BA

ROGER.
EVERYONE IS WAITING.
CHOPPERS TOO? THIS IS ROUGH.
YOU HEAR THAT, HARUKA !?
TIME FOR THE GUIDED TOUR!
HYUN (2WUM)
PLATOONS ONE, TWO, THREE, AND FOUR, HEAD TO YOUR FLANKING POSITIONS.
MAIN FORCE IS ORDERED TO PURSUE.


DON'T LET THEM GET AWAY!


I'VE GOT YOU THIS TIME.




BA (FLOP)
BA
BA

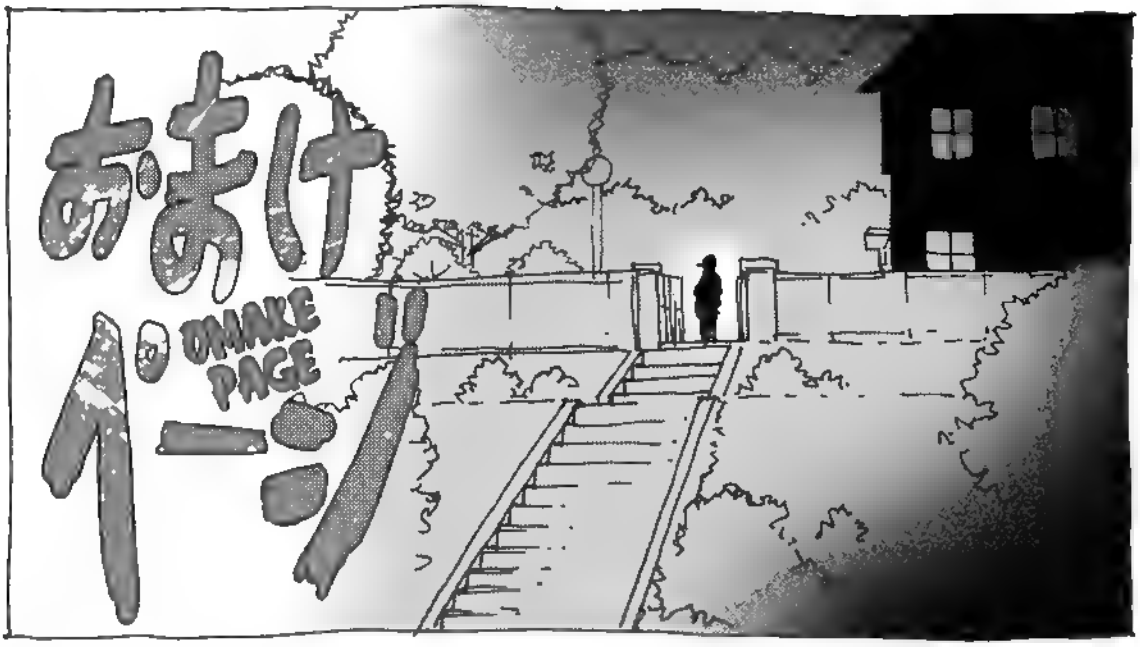
キュンッ
LONGBOW
FORM
ﾌﾞ"
ﾌﾞ"
ﾌﾞ"

BYUN (ZWIP)
KA (CLAK)
BOFU! (BWAAF)

BO (BSHOOH)
BO
BO
BO
TAKING FIRE TO MY TAIL!
I HAVE NO CONTROL! MAKING AN EMERGENCY LANDING!

...
NICE JOB, NEW GUY.
ALL UNITS, BEGIN OPERA-TION!!

Until
Death
do us
Part

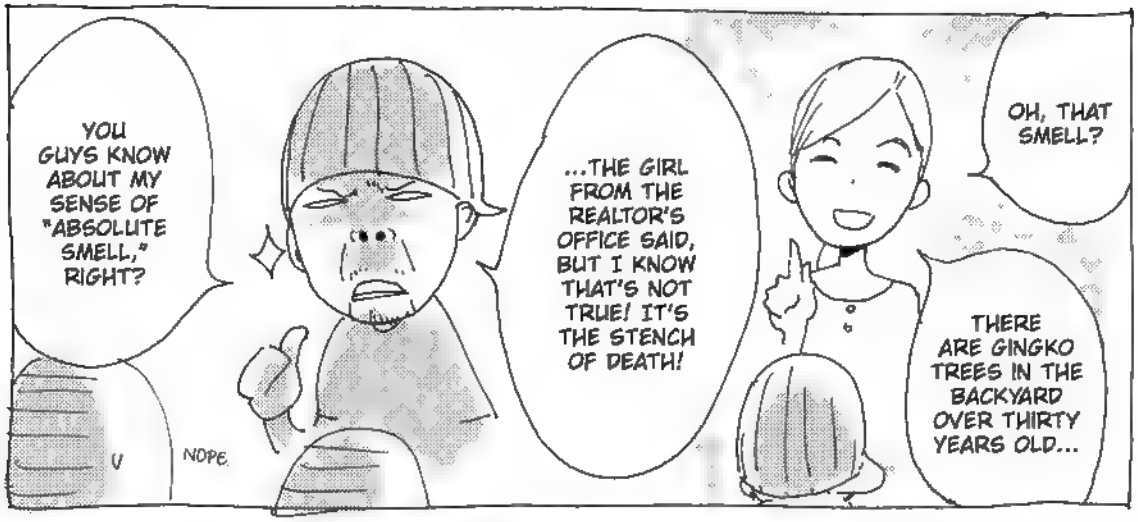

おまけページ
OMAKE PAGE

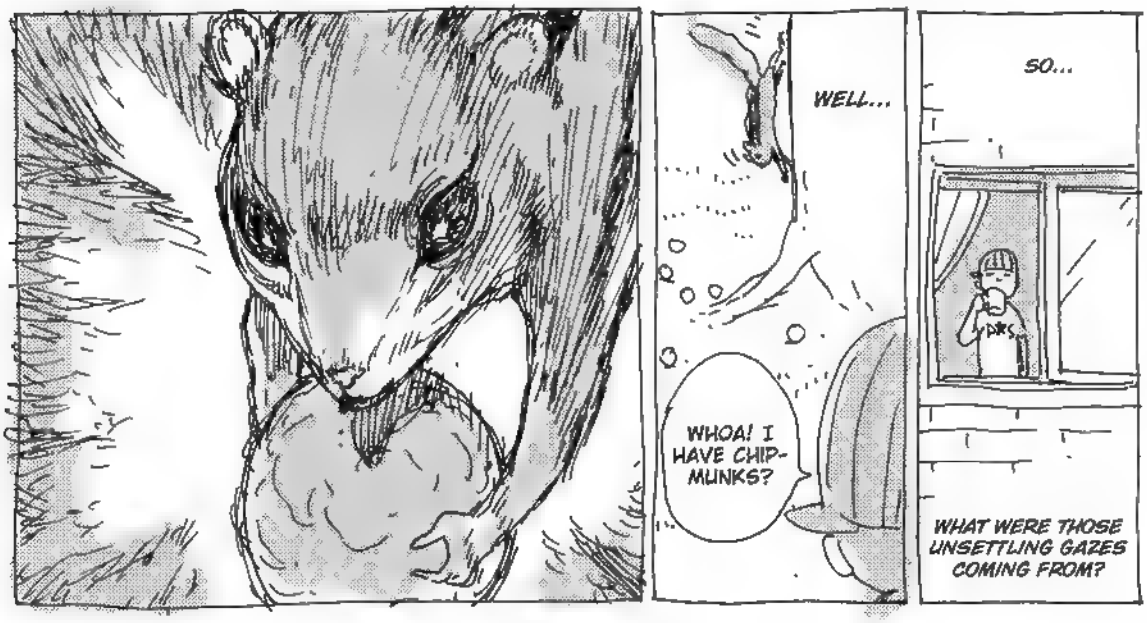
...THAT I FIRST VISITED IN THE FALL OF LAST YEAR.
THERE'S A HOUSE, LOCATED IN THE SUBURBS A THIRTY MINUTE DRIVE AWAY FROM THE CITY...

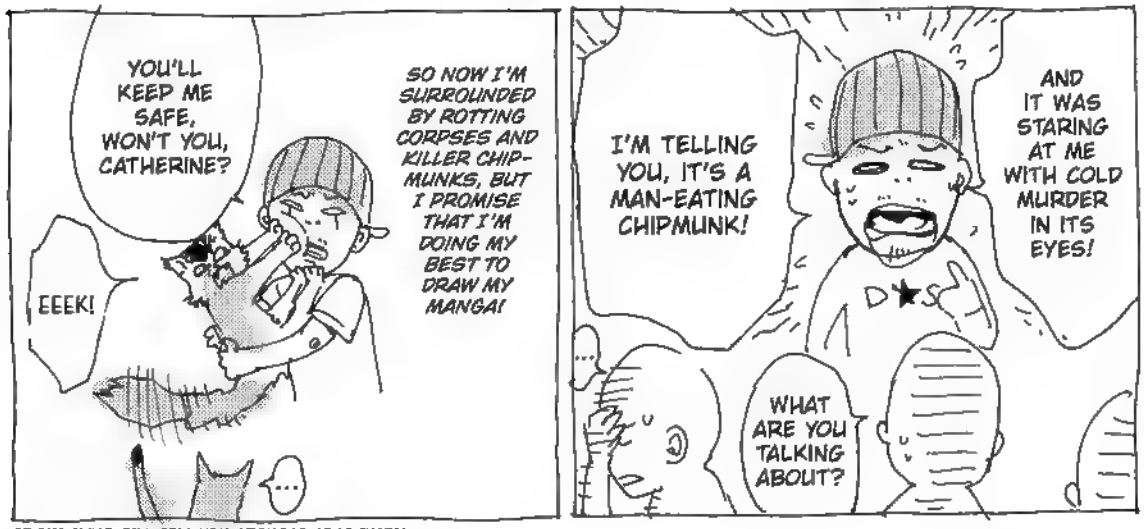
IS THIS... REALLY SAFE?
I FELT AN EERIE SENSATION THAT COULDN'T BE PUT INTO WORDS AS I STEPPED ONTO THE PREMISES.

...
...
D★S

JUST THEN!
MY NOSTRILS WERE ASSAULTED BY AN OMINOUS STENCH I'D NEVER SMELLED BEFORE!
WHAT IS THIS SMELL...!?
I FELT SPOOKY GAZING UPON MY SCION FROM AFAR AND THERE AMONG THE GROWTH...
THE FIRST THING I SAW IN THE YARD...
WAS THICK TREES AND FOLIAGE THAT HADN'T BEEN TOUCHED BY HUMAN HANDS IN DECADES
COULD IT BE...THE STENCH OF A ROTTING CORPSE!?
WHY IS IT A MOVIE POSTER?
IN OTHER WORDS, I MOVED OUT OF MY CITY OFFICE BUILDING AFTER FOUR YEARS AND INTO A THIRTY-YEAR-OLD HOME IN THE SUBURBS WITH A YARD!


YOU GUYS KNOW ABOUT MY SENSE OF "ABSOLUTE SMELL," RIGHT?
NOPE
...THE GIRL FROM THE REALTOR'S OFFICE SAID, BUT I KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE! IT'S THE STENCH OF DEATH!
OH, THAT SMELL?
THERE ARE GINGKO TREES IN THE BACKYARD OVER THIRTY YEARS OLD...




YOU'LL KEEP ME SAFE, WON'T YOU, CATHERINE?
EEEK!
SO NOW I'M SURROUNDED BY ROTTING CORPSES AND KILLER CHIP-MUNKS, BUT I PROMISE THAT I'M DOING MY BEST TO DRAW MY MANGA!
I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S A MAN-EATING CHIPMUNK!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AND IT WAS STARING AT ME WITH COLD MURDER IN ITS EYES!

IF I'M ALIVE, I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT NEXT TIME!!

THE CONTINUING(?) ADVENTURES OF POLICE CAT CATHERINE

Art Staff
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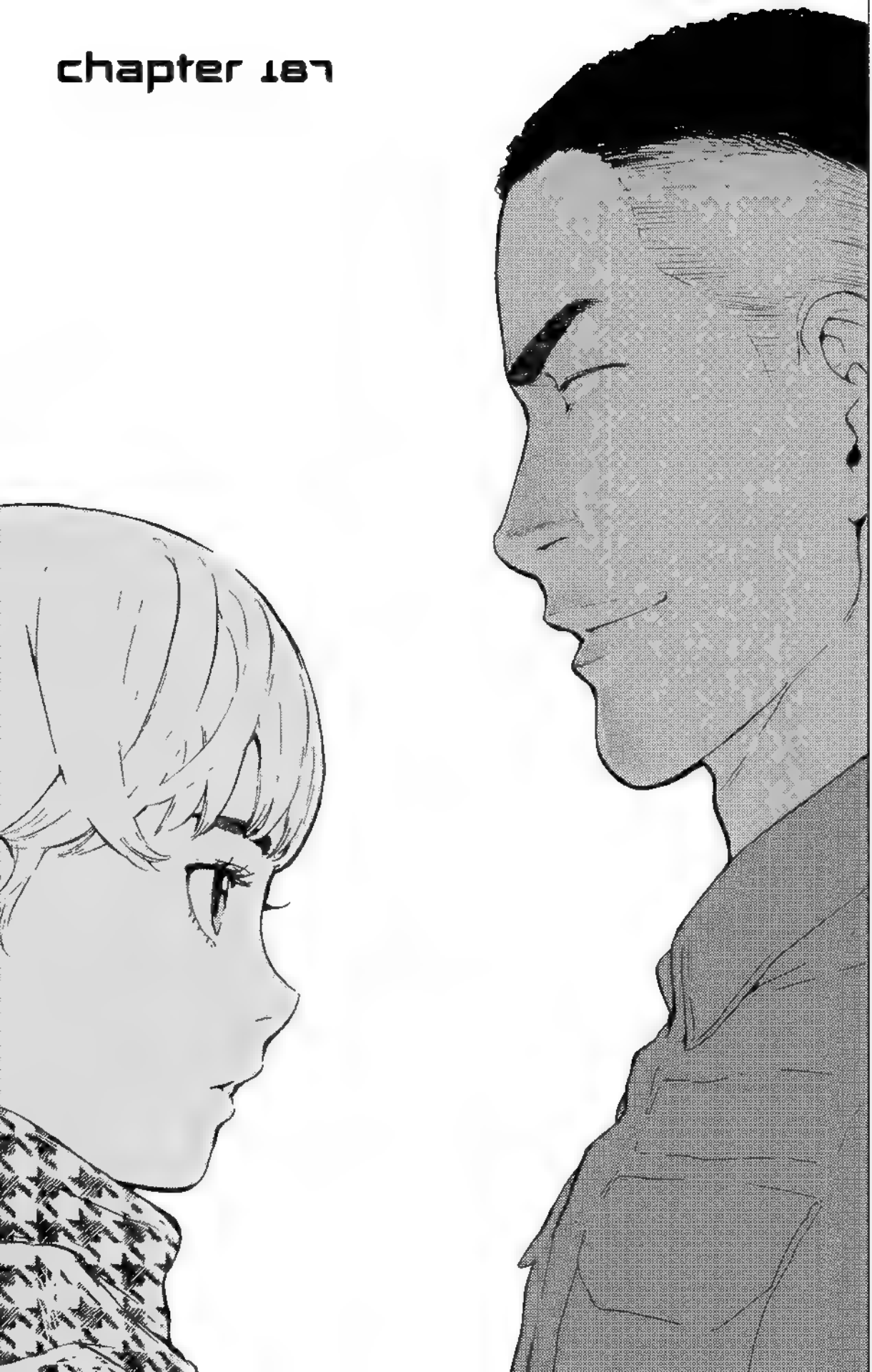
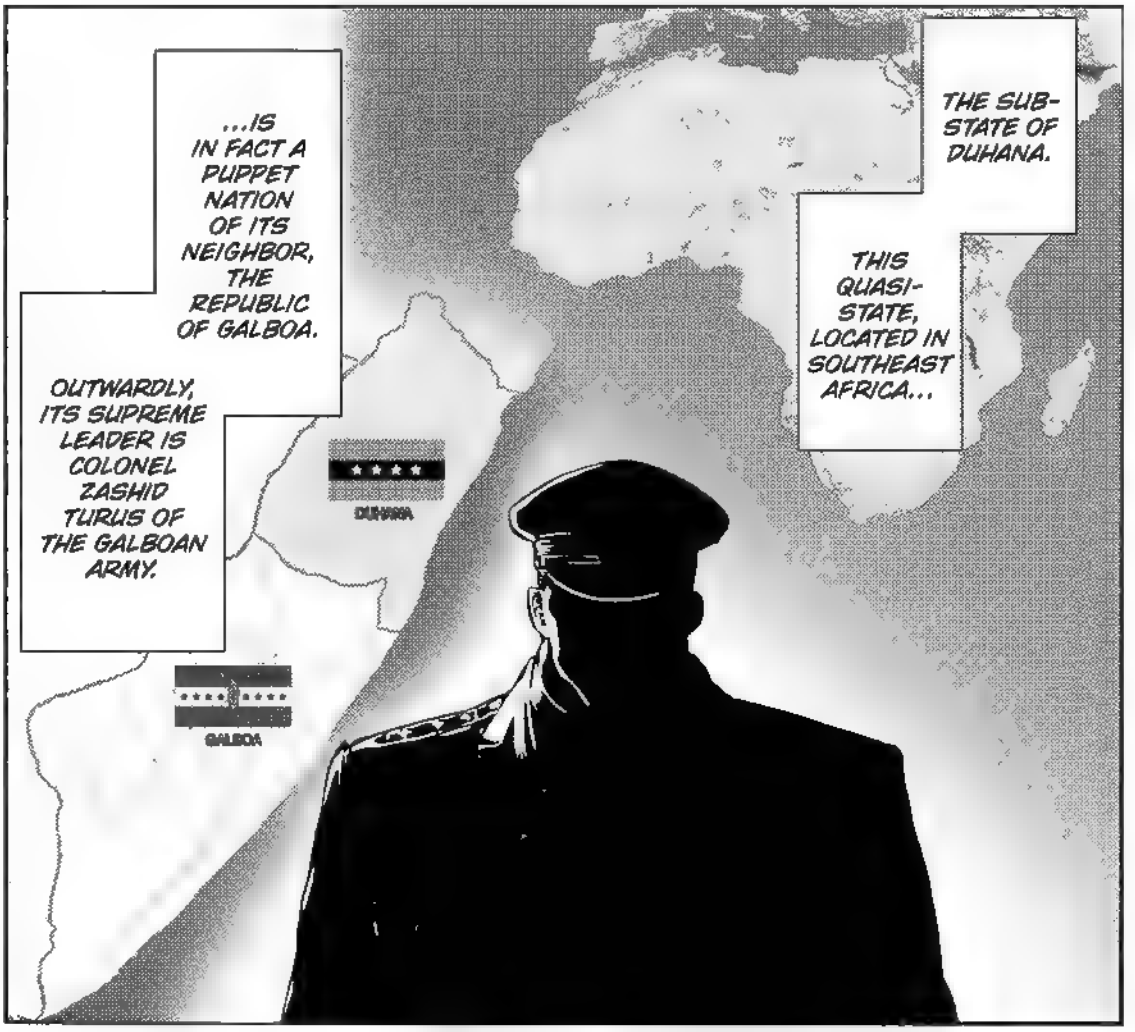
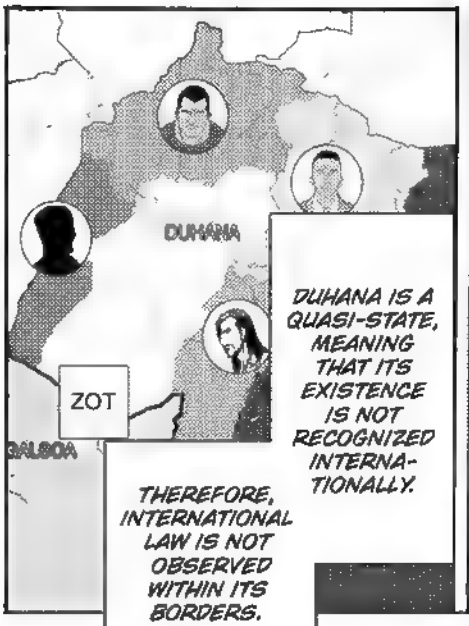
Design Assistance
Hitoshi Fukuchi

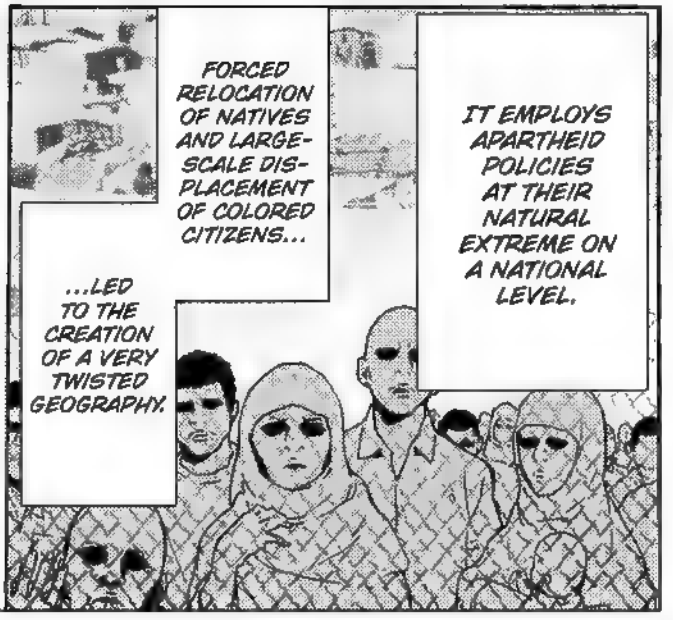
Until
Death
do us
Part

chapter 187




THE SUB-STATE OF DUHANA.
THIS QUASI-STATE, LOCATED IN SOUTHEAST AFRICA...
...IS IN FACT A PUPPET NATION OF ITS NEIGHBOR, THE REPUBLIC OF GALBOA.
OUTWARDLY, ITS SUPREME LEADER IS COLONEL ZASHID TURUS OF THE GALBOAN ARMY.
DUHANA
GALBOA


DUHANA
ZOT
GALBOA
DUHANA IS A QUASI-STATE, MEANING THAT ITS EXISTENCE IS NOT RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONALLY.
THEREFORE, INTERNATIONAL LAW IS NOT OBSERVED WITHIN ITS BORDERS.

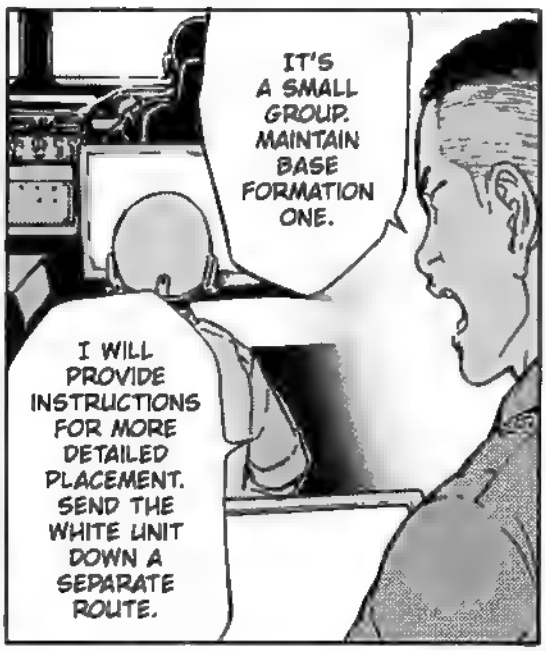

FORCED RELOCATION OF NATIVES AND LARGE-SCALE DISPLACEMENT OF COLORED CITIZENS...
IT EMPLOYS APARTHEID POLICIES AT THEIR NATURAL EXTREME ON A NATIONAL LEVEL.
...LED TO THE CREATION OF A VERY TWISTED GEOGRAPHY.

DUHANA
CIDO
THE RESULTING BLACK MARKET IS CRAFTILY UTILIZED TO ENSURE THAT THE LION'S SHARE OF THE PROFITS FLOWS BACK INTO GALBOA.
ブオオオ
BUOOO (VRRM)

data match

THAT'S THE SAME VEHICLE, SO THIS MUST BE THE SAME TEAM.
AS I THOUGHT ...

YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME THIS TIME... I'LL CATCH YOU FOR CERTAIN.

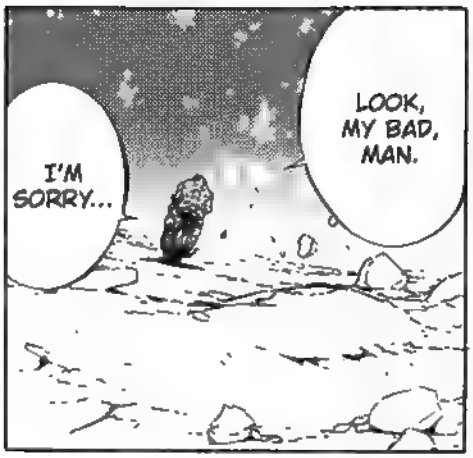

IT'S A SMALL GROUP. MAINTAIN BASE FORMATION ONE.
I WILL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS FOR MORE DETAILED PLACEMENT. SEND THE WHITE UNIT DOWN A SEPARATE ROUTE.

THE ENEMY IS A MECHANIZED TROOP BASED AROUND THE WHITE UNIT.
BE ON GUARD, EVERYONE!
Roger.
Roger.
Roger that.
AS IF I DIDN'T KNOW THAT SHIT ALREADY.

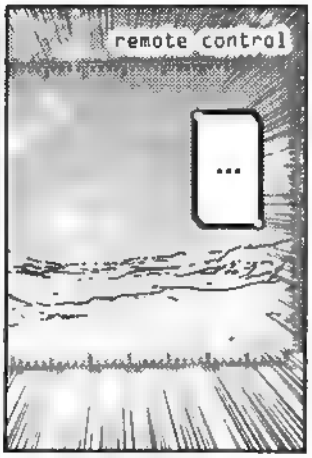
I do not have the data to answer that question.
WELL, MAKE AN EDUCATED GUESS.
BUT THAT AIN'T ALL OF 'EM.
SO WHERE ARE THE WHITE UNIT GUYS, ANYWAY?
Among them, there are eighteen 4WD vehicles, two surveillance motorcycles, and five armored vehicles.
All I know from the sound collection mics is that approximately twenty-five vehicles are en route.
That is impossible at present. I do not even have an accurate estimate of the enemy numbers.
SPARC SPEAKING
I cannot authorize personal actions outside the bounds of the operation.
THAT ONE! WHERE'S THE BOSS!?
I believe that one of them is a command vehicle.

SHUT UP AND TELL ME WHERE IT IS!!
It is too dangerous.
The Bucephalus and your suit are not capable of withstanding the armored vehicles' machine guns.
...over twice the current battle operation time of the Bucephalus.
Also, I estimate the time to reach the target to be forty-three minutes...
BEEP!
remote control
...
GU (HMPH)
GU
I'M GONNA TAKE THE BOSS DOWN THIS TIME TO MAKE UP FOR MY MISERABLE FAILURE LAST TIME!
I am forcing you to stand by at your ordered destination for now.
WHAA —!?
BA (WHUP)
DOSU (THUMP)
ドゾ

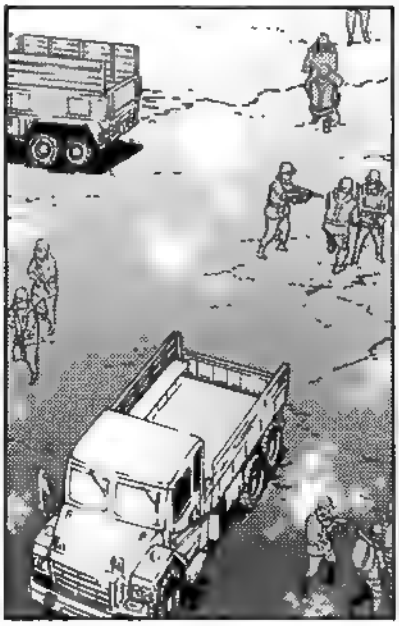
GIVE BACK THE CONTROLS!
H-HEY! DON'T JUST TAKE OVER MY BIKE!


I'M SORRY...
LOOK, MY BAD, MAN.

IS THAT COMPUTER CAPABLE OF GETTING PISSED???


remote control
...

ブオオオ
BUOOO (VROOM)



TWO RIDERS ON EACH
Five vehicles moving west.
SEVEN MORE TO THE EAST
THEY'VE BEGUN FANNING OUT LIKE THE OTHERS
SEVEN-TEEN TO BE ALERT'D NO LOADING ARMOIRE

YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, LITTLE MISS? THEY'LL HAVE US TOTALLY SURROUNDED.
UNDER-STOOD. CONTINUE AS PLANNED.
BUT WE NEED TO HAVE A SECURE WITHDRAWAL ROUTE.
IF THEY START PUSHING IN, THEY'LL OVERWHELM US WITH NUMBERS.
HE BLOCKED OFF ALL OF OUR ESCAPE ROUTES TO ENSURE WE CAN'T GET AWAY.
I KNOW THAT OUR ENEMY IS VERY SMART.
SO THERE'S NO STAYING PUT IN THE SAME SPOT THE WHOLE TIME.
DON'T WORRY. THE CIRCUM-STANCES OF BATTLE ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING.

BAKI
(CRAKK)
DOSU
(THUD)
ZUGA
(THWAM)

BUN (WHOOSH)
KASHA (KSHIK)
...THE WHITE UNIT!
TA (TEK)
HE'S GOOD!
GA
GA (WHAM)

GUNYA (SHWIP)
GAKI (KCHING)
KURU (SPIN)
AH—!
BA (WHOOSH)
HYU (WHIP)

GUGUGU (HRRRGK)
DOSA (THUD)
ドサッ
...

KYUN (SPIN)
SHINRYU JOUJUTSU— THE HOLY FLOWING STYLE OF BINDING.
I FINALLY MANAGED TO PULL IT OFF IN REAL BATTLE, SENSEI.
DADA (DASH)
KYUN (SHWIK)
KON (TAP)
KON
SHORT-BOW.

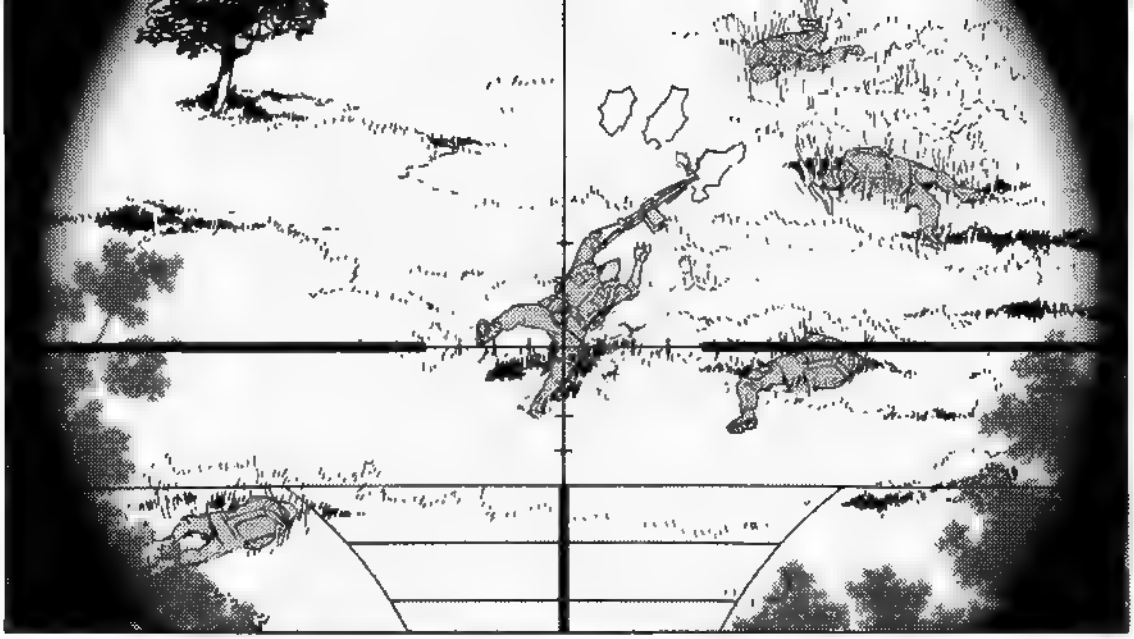
キュオ
KYUO (SHRIKK)
ZA (ZSHK)
ZA
THE WEARABLE COMPUTERS EMBEDDED WITHIN THEM ALLOW FOR MULTIPLE FORMS TO BE RETAINED.
THEIR WEAPONS ARE CRAFTED OF A SPECIAL KIND OF SHAPE-RETAINING PLASTIC.
THE STATE-OF-THE-ART POLYMERS ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN THEIR TENSION AND STRENGTH WHEN THINNED OUT LIKE THIS.
THE INTERIOR IS SIMPLY HOLLOWED OUT TO PROVIDE EXTRA SURFACE SPACE.
WHILE THEY MIGHT LOOK BIGGER, THEY ARE STILL THE SAME MASS, OF COURSE.

HYUN
(SWISH)
KA
(CLAKK)
HYUOOO
(FWOOOM)

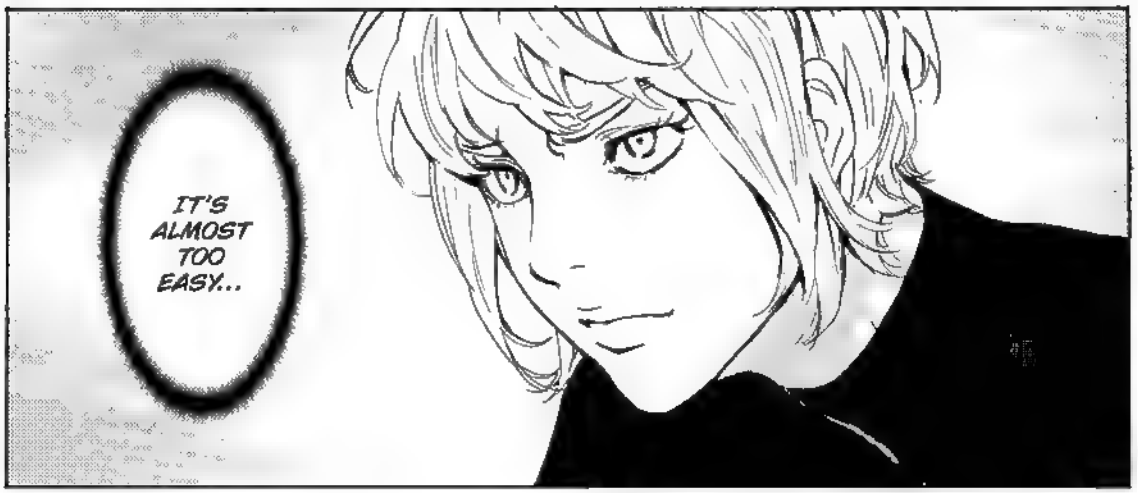
(KYUN TWING)
GA
GA
GA (WHAM)
TA
TA
TA (TAT)
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
TA
GA (TAK)
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA

ドドドドドド

BAZU
(ASSAULT)
BASU
BASU
(SHOT)
BASU

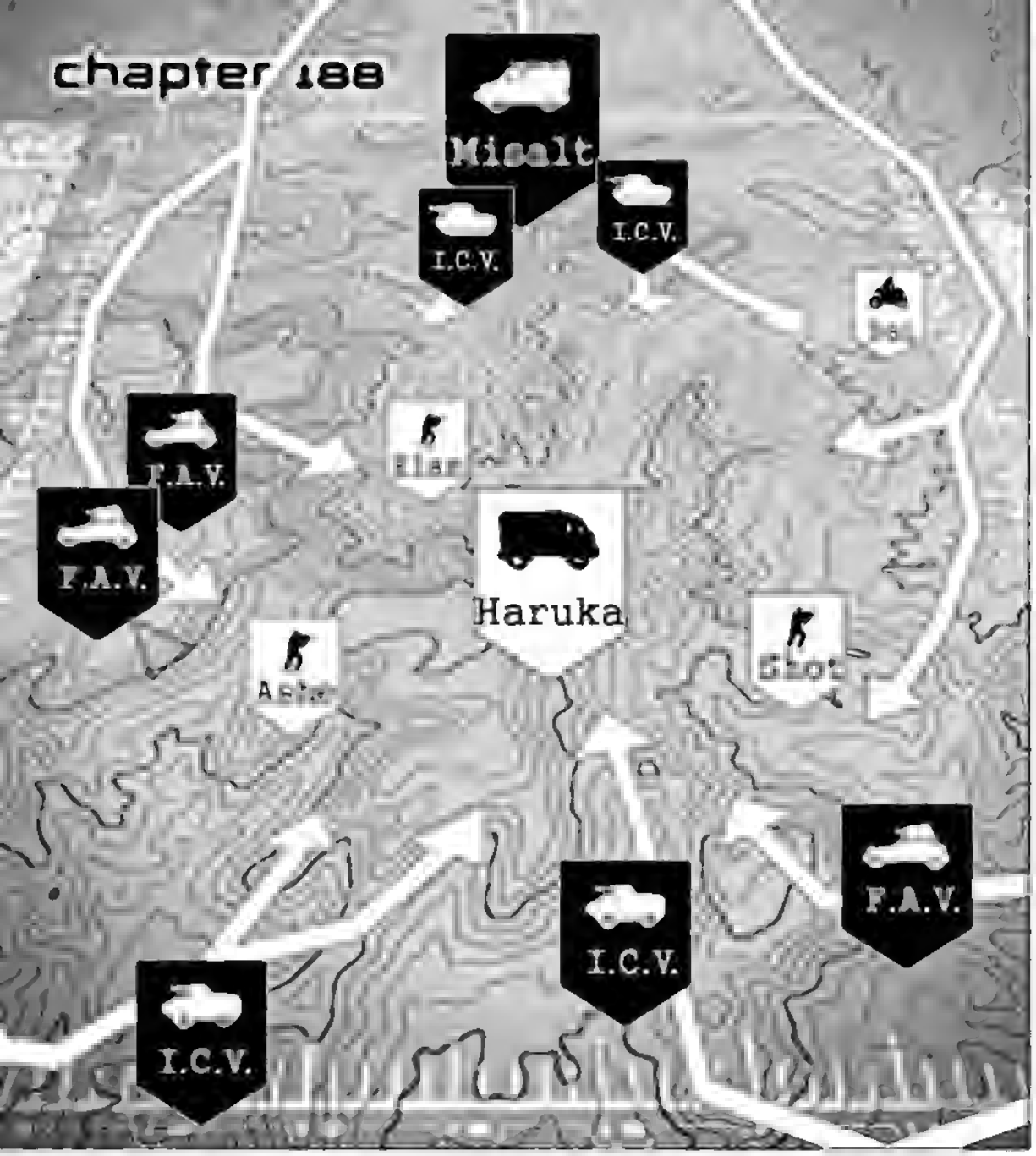


WITH TOOYAMA'S POWERS, THERE'S NO FOE A SNIPER CAN'T HIT.
INCRED-IBLE... IT'S SO EASY.


IT'S ALMOST TOO EASY...

FIRST PLATOON, A-TEAM IS SILENT!
THIRD PLATOON, B-TEAM TAKING SNIPER FIRE, TWO CASUALTIES.
FOURTH PLATOON, A-TEAM CANNOT BE REACHED!
THAT'S WRONG... SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE...
I COULD FINISH THEM OFF WITH HEAVY WEAPONRY, BUT...
SEND PERSONNEL FROM THE BLOCKADE TO THE ATTACK TEAMS.
MY PERFECT TRAP, SO EASILY BROKEN.

WERE THESE FOOLS ACTUALLY MAKING THEIR PLANS UNDER THAT ASSUMPTION TO START WITH?
...I WANTED TO TAKE THEM ALIVE
GROUP THE ATTACK SQUADS UP TWO TEAMS IN ONE
FOCUS ON SECURING THE AREA AND KEEPING THEM IMMOBILIZED
THIRD PLATOON, B-TEAM, ALL MEMBERS INJURED
ANY MORE DAMAGES TO OUR MANPOWER, AND I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ANSWER TO DAD


chapter 188
Misalt
I.C.V.
I.C.V.
F.A.V.
F.A.V.
Haruka
I.C.V.
F.A.V.
I.C.V.
I.C.V.

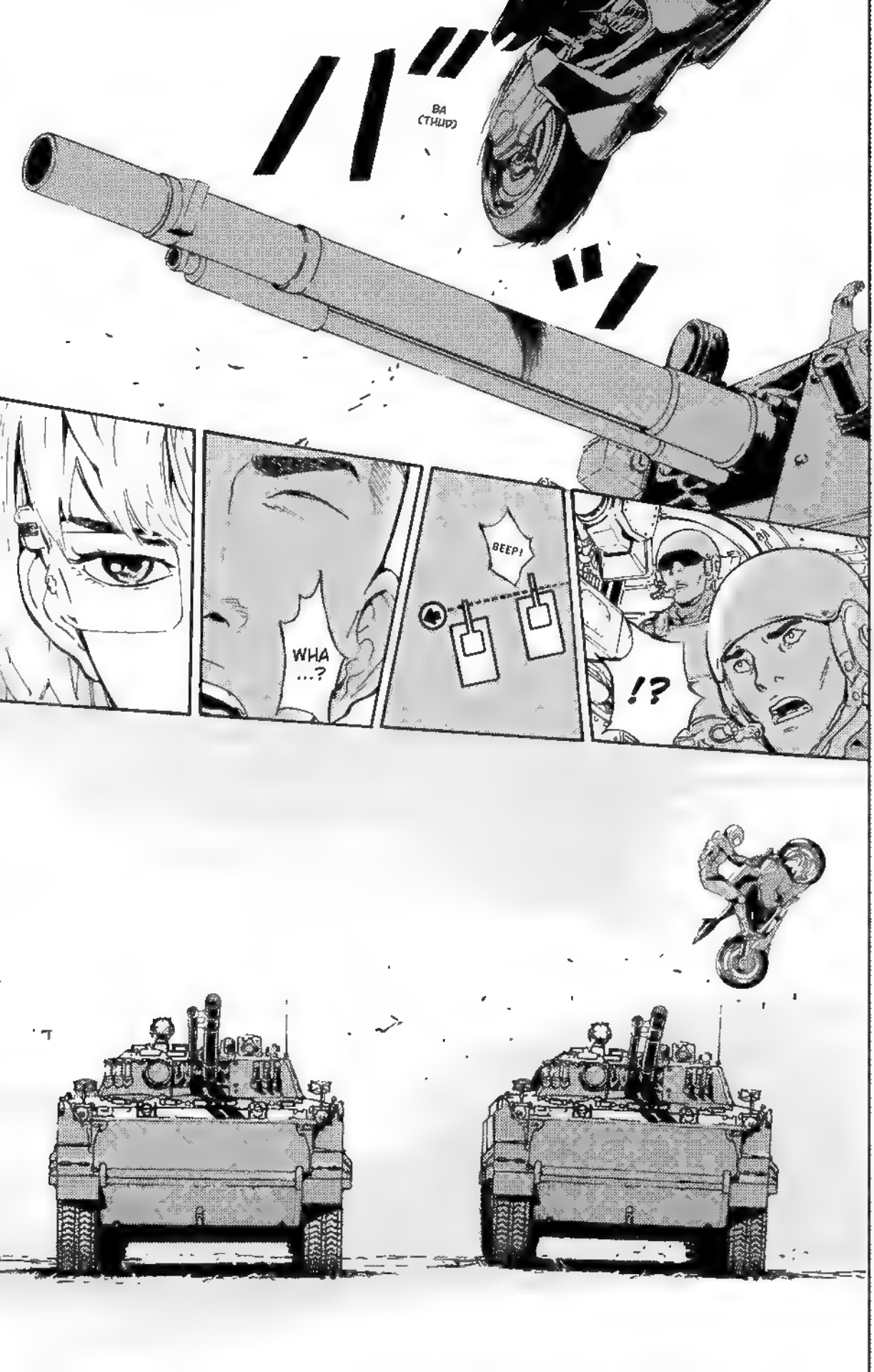
チュラ
チュラ
チュー

I DIDN'T GET ENOUGH TO DO AT THE START
It cannot be helped You are unsuited to guerrilla combat
fully re charged
HOW ARE THE CAPACITOR CELLS DOING?
The armored vehicles are moving.
'BOUT DAMN TIME...

I LIKE BIG, FLASHY ACTION.

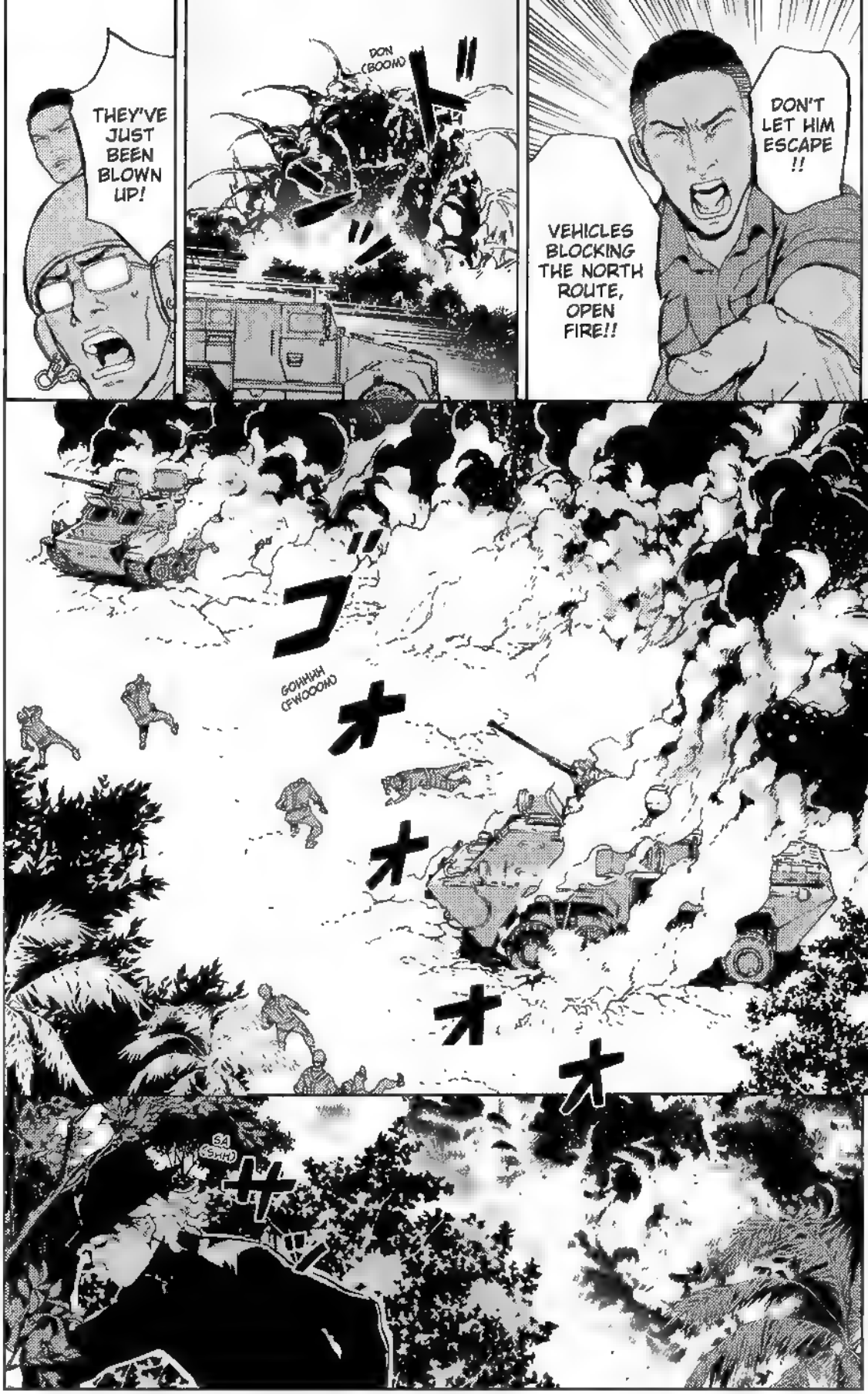
IF I SUFFER ANY MORE DAMAGE, I'LL DEMOLISH ME OUT OF ANGER
AT THIS RATE, I'LL HAVE TO BE QUICK AS LONG AS ONE OF THEM SURVIVES THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS
AIM!

ギ"
イ
イ
イ
Fl—
ゴクッ


BA
(THUD)
WHA
...?
BEEP!
!?

BARA (CLUNK)
HE SEVERED THE METAL !?
MISSION SUCCESS!
WHAT !?
HOW CAN ONE BIKE BE CAPABLE OF THAT!?
I'VE SILENCED THEIR CANNONS!
WHAT JUST HAP-PENED !?

KKKKK (SKRRR)
WHA ...?
HYUN (SWOOM)
TIME TO PULL BACK.
I KNOW.


THEY'VE JUST BEEN BLOWN UP!
DON (BOOM)
DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE !!
VEHICLES BLOCKING THE NORTH ROUTE, OPEN FIRE!!
ゴオオオオオ
GOHHHH (FWOOOM)
SA (SHH)

HOW... HOW!?
IS THIS A NIGHT-MARE?
MY EVERY MOVE HAS BEEN BLOCKED! IT'S LIKE THEY SAW EVERYTHING AHEAD OF TIME!!
THERE ARE NO ESCAPE ROUTES NO MATTER HOW THEY STRUGGLE!! CORNER THEM
THEY'RE TRAPPED LIKE RATS!!

THAT'S THE SPOT.

GU (HRRRG)
7"
GU
7"
GU
7"
GU
7"
PUT SUSPENSION IN MAINTENANCE MODE.
Yes, Dai.
WHICH ONE!?
...
I will fine-tune the angle for you.
PI (BEEP)
PI

BA
(SHUMP)
NRAAH!!
GYURURURU
(SKREEE)

ズズズ
DUDUDU (TERRO)
TIM-BERRR !!
A!!

HERE THEY COME.
ガ
GA (GRAB)
He's correct, Dai.
THE UNIMOG CAN'T ESCAPE A CHOPPER.
PERHAPS NOT EVEN THE BUCEPHALUS CAN.
WHOA!
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA!?
バ
BATAN (FLOP)
タン
PLUS THE ENEMY'S ON GUARD NOW. THEY WON'T DROP TO WITHIN RANGE OF THE ARROWS.
IF WE COULD KILL THE PILOT, THAT WOULD WORK, BUT THE LEADER SAYS NO.
WHAT DO WE DO, THEN!? JUST KNOCK IT DOWN WITH ANOTHER ARROW, RIGHT?

GUI (GRIP)
グイ
THAT'S IT, HUH!?
GATAN (THUMP)
ガタン
ゴト
GOTO

YOU'RE JUST HELPING GET THEM THERE.
SO THIS PART IS SOMEONE ELSE'S JOB.
BA
BA
BA
BA
BA

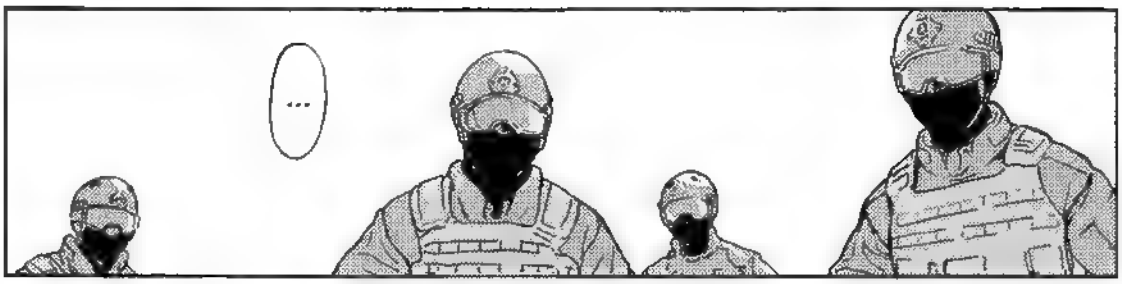
...
YOU'RE GONNA KNOCK IT DOWN WITH A RIFLE MEANT FOR HUMAN TARGETS?
THAT'S RIGHT. I'VE GOT STEEL-PENETRATING ROUNDS IN THIS GUN...
...BUT EVEN THEY AREN'T ENOUGH TO PUNCTURE THAT HELI-COPTER'S HULL.
BUT...

THOSE SINGLE-ROTOR HELIS ALL HAVE ONE FATAL WEAKNESS.
IF YOU CAN HIT THE FANTAIL IN THE RIGHT SPOT...
フゥゥ
FUUU (HUFF)
DON (BLAM)
!?
バキン (KRAKK)

BARA
BARA
(KCHUNK)
BARA
MAKING AN EMERGENCY LANDING WITH AUTO-ROTATION!!
PI
PI
PI
I-I'VE LOST CONTROL!
PI
(BEEP)
ZUGAA
(KDUSH)

...INCREDIBLE...
...PREVENTING IT FROM POWERING THE COUNTER-TORQUE IT NEEDS.
WHEN THE CENTER AXLE OF THOSE FAN-TAILS GETS WARPED, THE HIGH ROTATION SPEED GOES AWRY...
BUOOO (VRRRM)
ブオオオオ
BIIII (TEARD)
ビイイイ
BAAA (ZZMM)
バアアア

SO LONG, SUCKERS !!
BARA (KLUNK)
KIKI
KIKI (SCREECH)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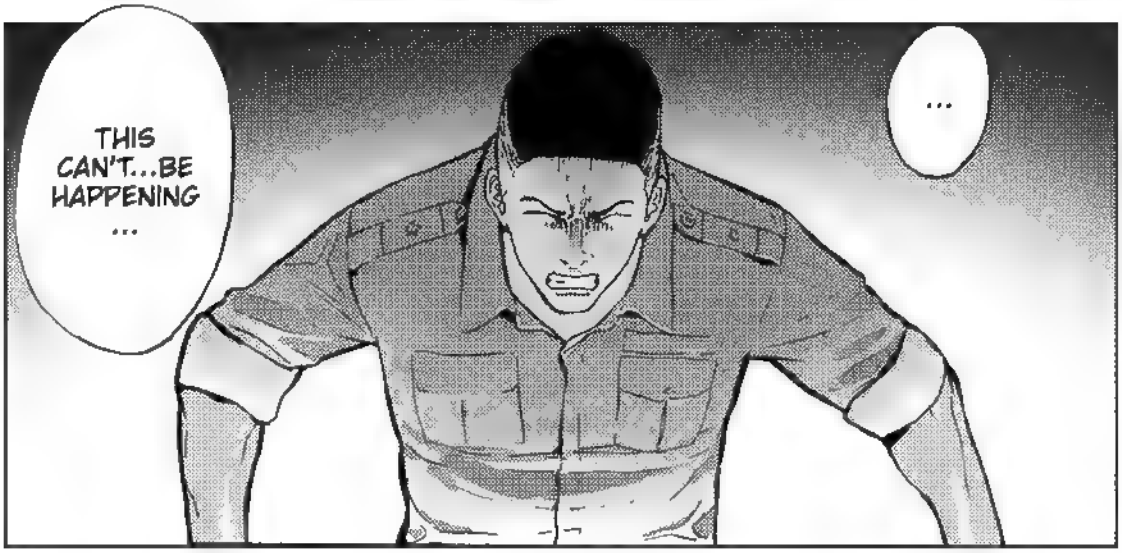
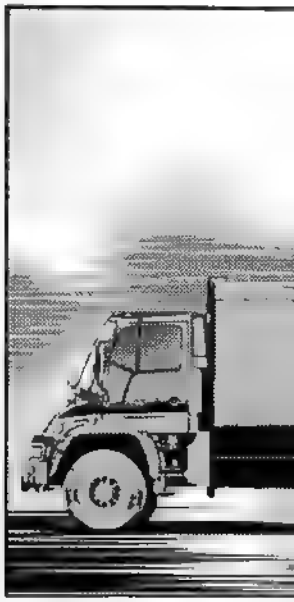

THIS CAN'T...BE HAPPENING ...
...

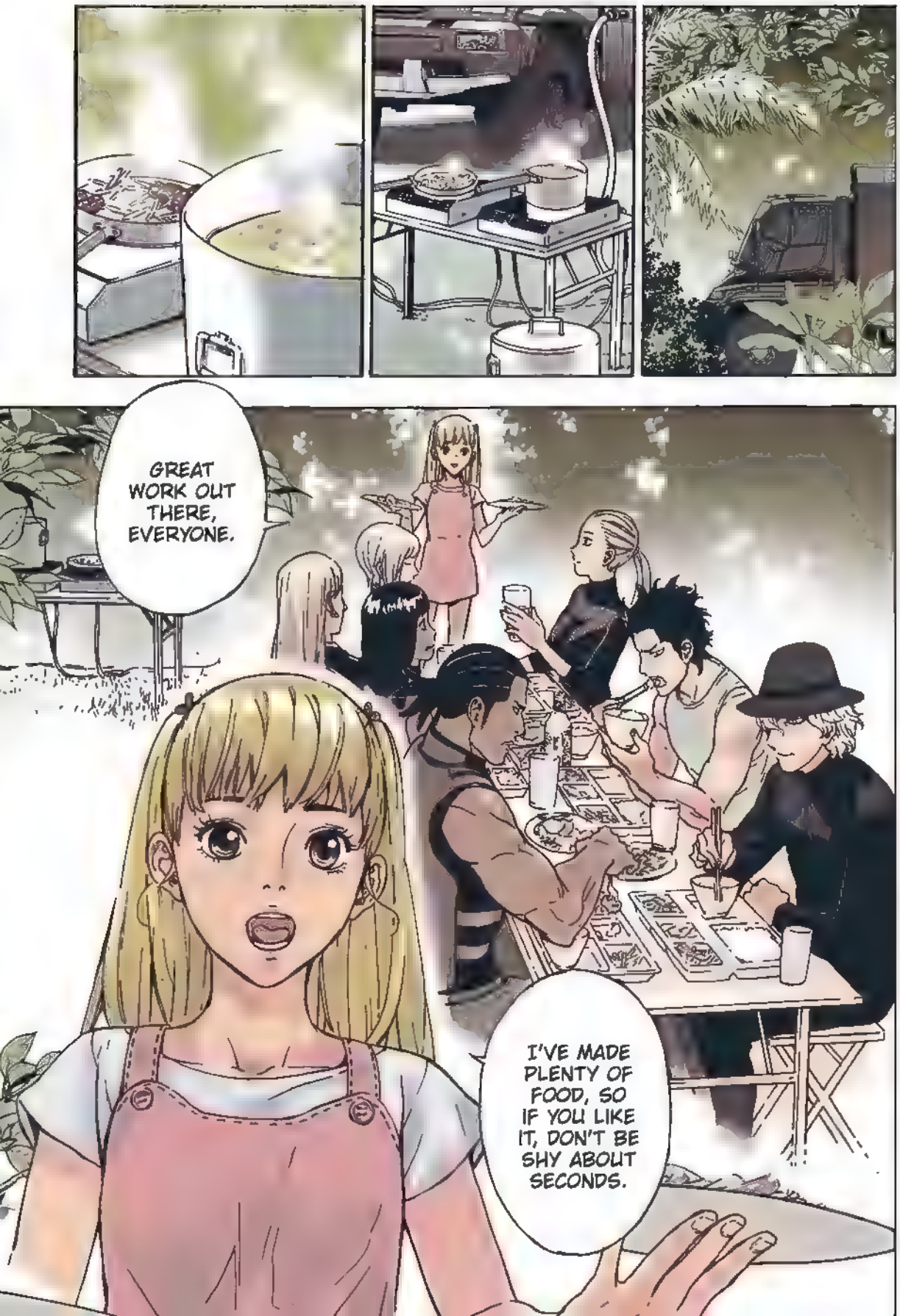
YOU WERE OUTWITTED AT *EVERY* TURN...
...AND HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
...Yes, sir...
...
IT CAN'T BE...
UNLESS...
...

THAT WILL MAKE UP FOR ALL OF YOUR FAILURES.
I WILL SEND YOU A PICTURE OF HER LATER.
HUH!?
PAR-DON?
WHAT DO YOU ...?
USE ANY MEANS NECES-SARY...
JUST CAPTURE A GIRL I BELIEVE TO BE AMONG THE ENEMY AND BRING HER TO ME.
Y-YES, SIR!
BA (WUP)
HOWEVER! YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HARM A HAIR ON HER BODY!!
IF YOU DO, YOU WILL PAY WITH YOUR LIFE.

NO ONE ALIVE CAN POSSIBLY OUTWIT MISALT IN EVERY WAY.
HEH-HEH-HEH...

EVEN I AM NOT CAPABLE OF IT.
IT CAN ONLY BE DONE BY SOMEONE WITH THE POWER OF FORESIGHT ...
...HARUKA TOOYAMA.



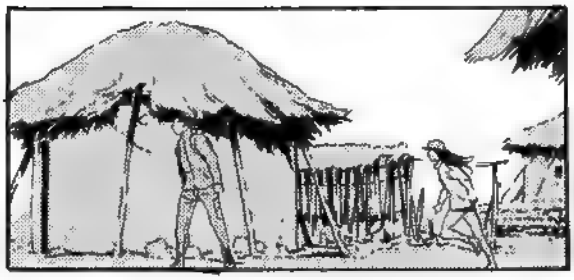

GREAT WORK OUT THERE, EVERYONE.
I'VE MADE PLENTY OF FOOD, SO IF YOU LIKE IT, DON'T BE SHY ABOUT SECONDS.

chapter 189

chapter 189

...YOU'RE TOO SERIOUS, KNOW THAT...?
LOOK AT THEM, HAVING A PICNIC AT A TIME LIKE THIS...
THERE'S A VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS NEARBY. I'M RUNNING SOME RECON TO SEE WHAT CONDITIONS ARE LIKE.
...
GATA (THUMP) ガタッ
I'LL JOIN YOU.
WE'RE THE ONLY TWO SUITED FOR RECONNAIS-SANCE.

...
THERE'S NO HURRY.
MAKE IT QUICK, THEN.
FORGET IT. I CAN'T BEAT HER IN AN ARGUMENT ...
...
EXCUSE ME!? THAT'S NOT—
DAI, I'M GOING TO BORROW BUCEPHALUS.
YEAH, SURE.
JUST BE CAREFUL, PLEASE.

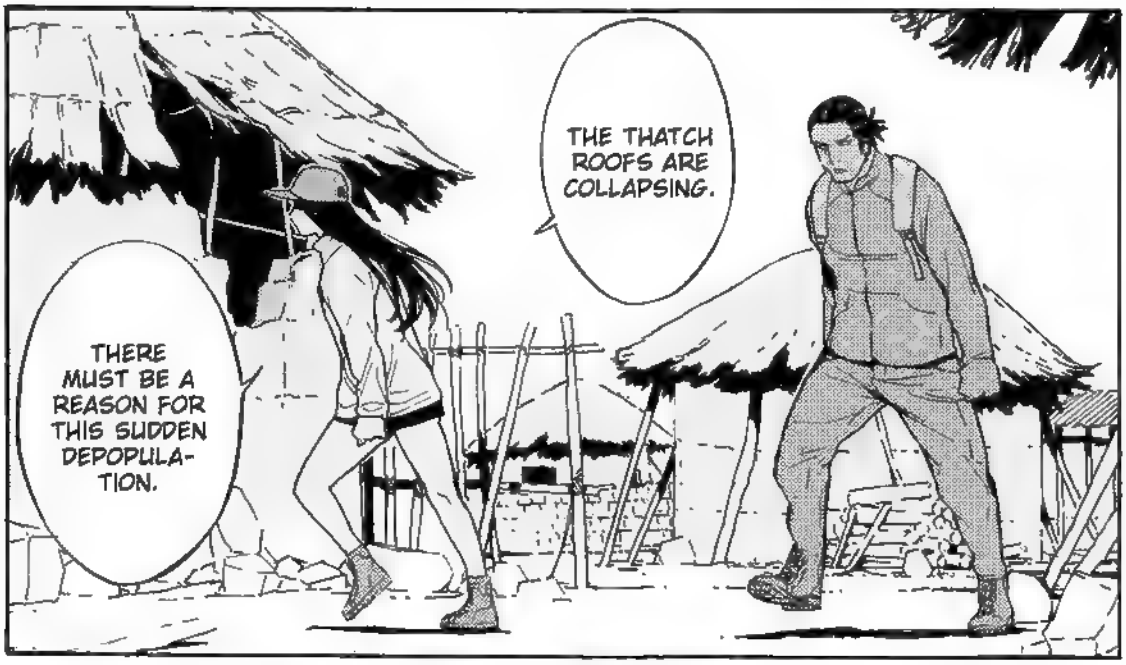


THAT'S A VALUABLE TOOL HERE.
THEY WOULDN'T LEAVE THAT OLD CAR, RIGHT? IT STILL LOOKS FUNCTIONAL.

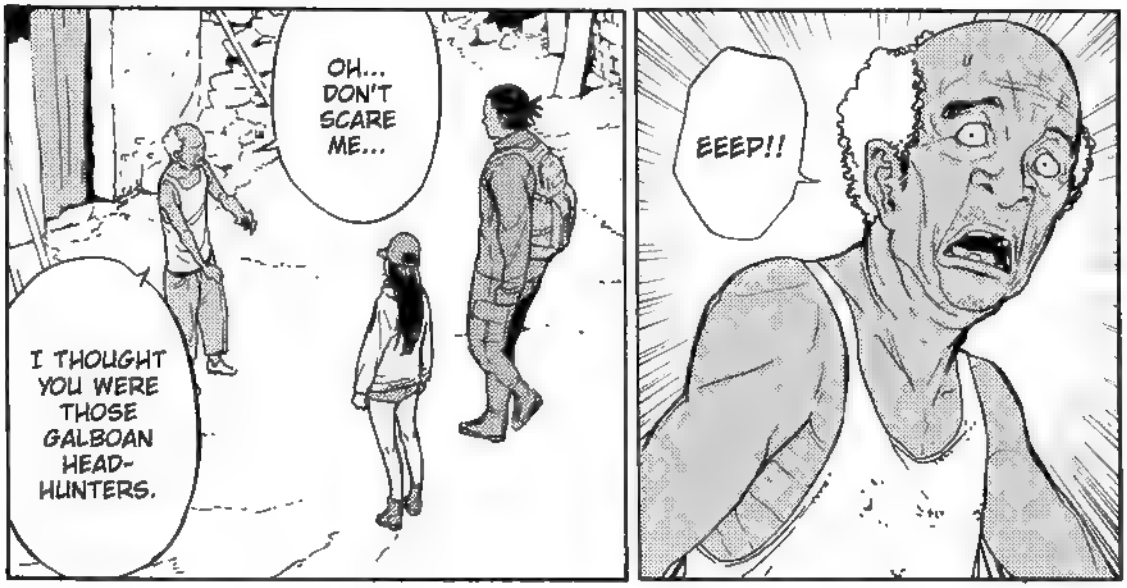
SHE'S NOTICING ALL THE PROPER DETAILS ...
...VERY INTERESTING ...
...

BUT ABOUT HALF OF THE HOMES LOOK TO BE FALLING APART...

...BUT IT SHOULDN'T BE TOTALLY ABANDONED ...
...I DON'T SEE ANYONE...


THE THATCH ROOFS ARE COLLAPSING.
THERE MUST BE A REASON FOR THIS SUDDEN DEPOPULATION.

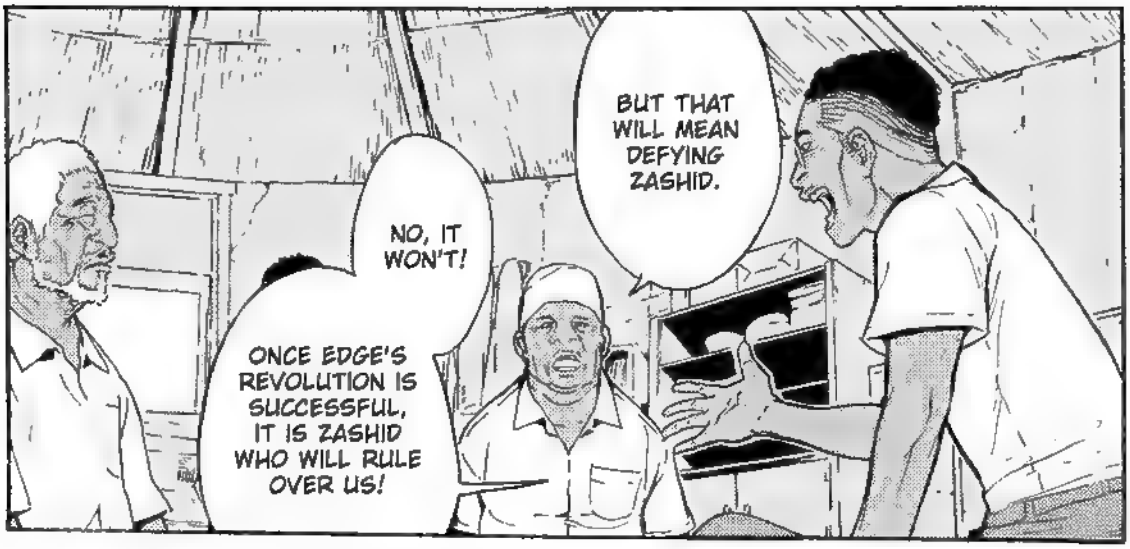
YO.


OH... DON'T SCARE ME...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE THOSE GALBOAN HEAD-HUNTERS.
EEEP!!

MORE TRAVELERS, I TAKE IT?
SORRY TO STARTLE YOU.
HEAD-HUNTERS ?
WELL, THERE'S NO ONE HERE BECAUSE THE GALBOAN SOLDIERS TOOK ALL THE MEN OFF TO BUILD SOME PLANT.
SO YOU WON'T MAKE ANY MONEY HERE.
JUST DOING SOME RESEARCH ON WHAT I'LL NEED TO SET UP SHOP.
NO, I WAS ACTUALLY THINKING OF OPENING A BUSINESS AROUND HERE.
THEY'RE BUILDING SOME GIANT FACILITY OUT THERE.
NO ONE'S COME BACK IN SIX MONTHS.
THERE'S A PLATEAU BEYOND THAT MOUNTAIN THERE.
PLANT ?

THEY SAY ALL THE WORKING-AGE MEN FOR MILES AROUND HAVE BEEN SCOOPED UP.
GIDO TURUS...
AND NO ONE CAN RESIST, BECAUSE GIDO'S THE MAN IN CHARGE.
...
WHO ELSE HAS COME?
DID YOU SAY "MORE" TRAVELERS?

HE JUST WENT TO SPEAK TO THE ELDER.
IF GALBOA CONTINUES TO MONOPOLIZE EVERYTHING THAT BELONGS TO US...
...THEN WE HAVE NO FUTURE!!
NOW IS THE TIME...
...TO FOLLOW EDGE'S ORDERS AND LIBERATE OUR NATION FROM GALBOA!


BUT THAT WILL MEAN DEFYING ZASHID.
NO, IT WON'T!
ONCE EDGE'S REVOLUTION IS SUCCESSFUL, IT IS ZASHID WHO WILL RULE OVER US!

HMM ...

...AND STOOD UP FOR DUHANA!!
AFTER ALL, HE REMOVED GALBOA FROM OUR LAND...

...

A VERY INTEREST-ING TALE INDEED...

THANK YOU, MY BROTHERS.
WE WILL PASS THIS MESSAGE TO THE OTHERS.
WHO TOLD YOU TO SAY THOSE THINGS!?
WHAT ARE THEY GETTING OUT OF BLOWING SMOKE UP THE PEOPLE'S ASSES!?
GUI (YANK)
WHOA!

ME.
I-I DON'T KNOW!
HE JUST FOUND ME IN TOWN AND PAID ME TO DO IT!
WHO DID!?
BA (WHUP)
HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING. I JUST PAID HIM THE MONEY.
MOVE IT!!
AND WHO ARE YOU, BABY?

DON
(SHOVE)
SUPA
(SWIKK)
DATA
(DASH)
TSK!
WHAT
WAS
THAT!?
BA
(HUP)

IS THAT YOU, BOLDORA!?
WAIT A SEC...
THE TRAITOR WHO ABANDONED HIS COUNTRY AND RAN, BACK HERE AT HOME?
SUTA (SHTUP)
DAMN, HOW ABOUT THAT.
YOUR WEAPON WILL NOT WORK ON ME.
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MISERABLE WE WERE, SUFFERING UNDER GENIE!?
SHUT UP.
NO! I WAS ONLY LOOKING FOR DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTRY.
I'M ONLY HERE ON A DIFFERENT MISSION, COLLECTING INTEL.

I'M GONNA KILL YOU.
WHAT MORE FITTING DEATH FOR A TRAITOR THAN ONE IN THE LAND HE BETRAYED?
BUSHUUU (WHOOSH)
WHEN DID HE THROW THAT!?
I NEVER SAW IT HAPPEN!
KAAN (CLACK)
HRG!
BYU (TWIP)

ZUZAZA (ZZSH)
DA (DASH)
UGH ...
I WON'T USE A GUN SINCE I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU.
BUT DON'T ASSUME I'M THE SAME GUY YOU REMEMBER.
I'VE GROWN A LOT SINCE THE LAST TIME YOU SAW ME.

KIN (TWANG)
DAMN. DEFLECTED IT WITH A ROCK, HUH?
I AGREE YOU'VE GOTTEN BETTER...
FUWA (FWUFF)
...WHEN I NEED TO, I THROW IT SOFTER THAN USUAL...
MAMORU HIJIKATA, THEN...
I HEARD A TRICK FROM A GUY WHO CAN'T SEE.
HE SAID THERE WAS MORE INFO IN SOUND THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.

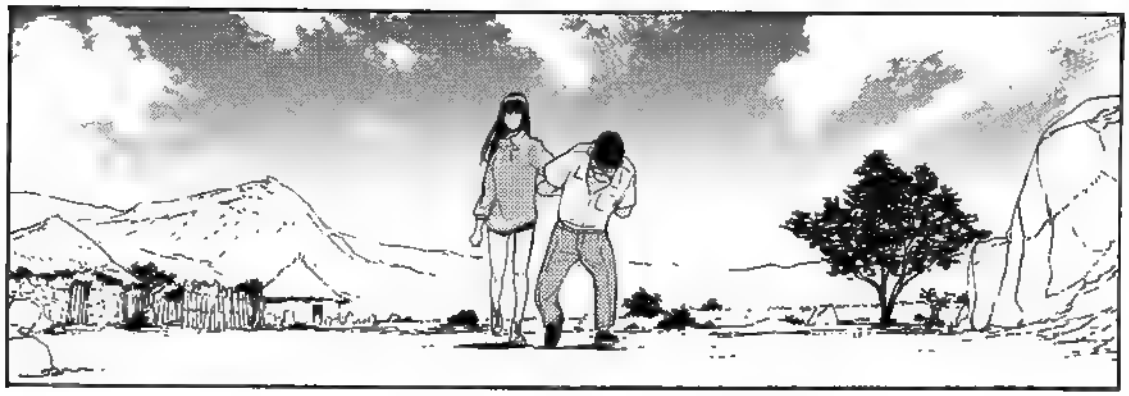
...SO IT RESTS ON THE AIR, RATHER THAN CUTTING IT.
IT MAKES LESS NOISE AND IS HARDER TO INTERCEPT.
SO I'M GONNA GIVE YOU THE VERY BEST I'VE GOT!
HYUN (SWISH)
I ALSO LEARNED HOW TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY FROM ANOTHER DEADLY RIVAL.

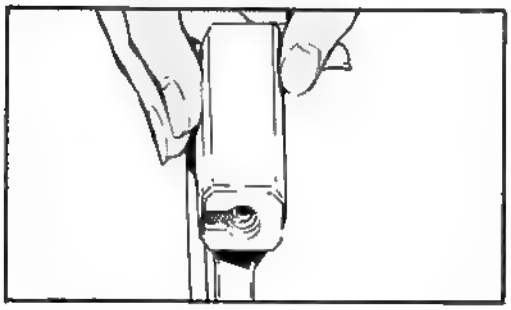
THE SECOND APPROACHES.
HE BLOCKS THE FIRST.
TINK

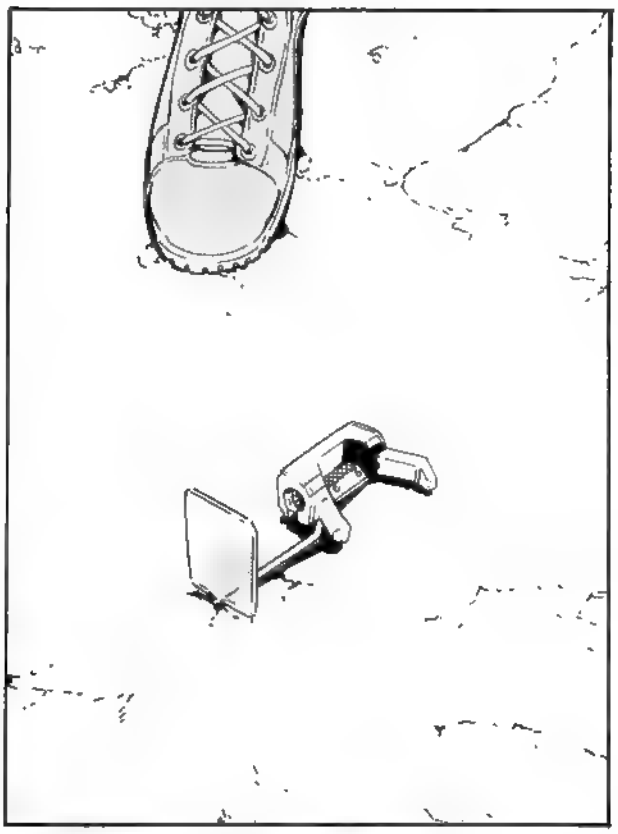
GOHH
(VOOM)
...I GIVE...
A THREE-PART STAGGERED ATTACK, HUH...?

...SO IT SEEMS...
...ISN'T GOING TO STRIKE A FATAL BLOW.
IT WASN'T A TOTAL VICTORY. BUT A DESPERATION COUNTER LIKE THAT...
ZAZA (ZSHH)
WHY'D YOU COME BACK? DEPENDING ON YOUR ANSWER, I MIGHT NEED YOU TO DIE FOR REAL.
SO TELL ME.

WHAT?
BUT...
I CAME BACK TO CAPTURE MAMORU HIJIKATA.
I'VE CHANGED MY MIND.



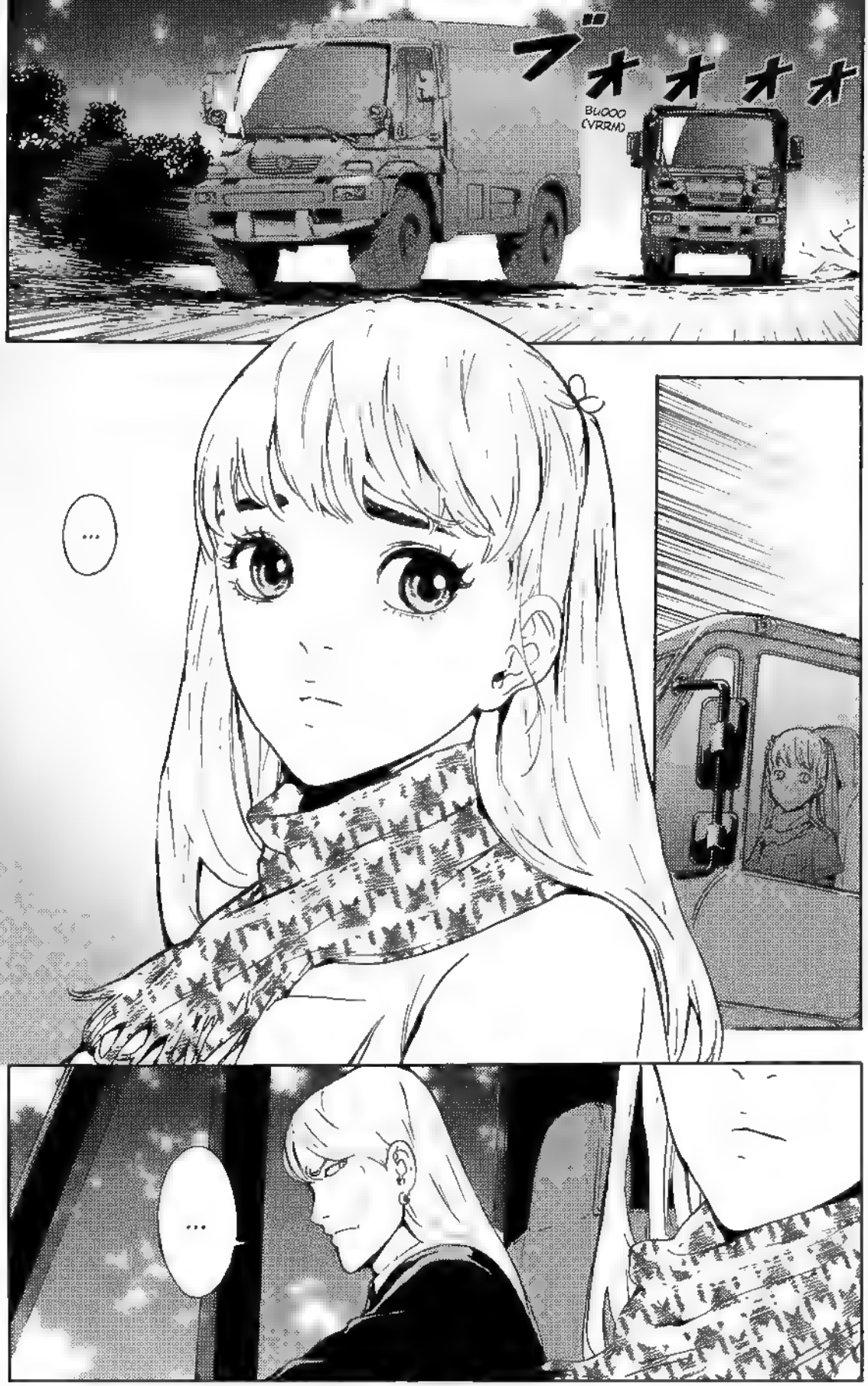


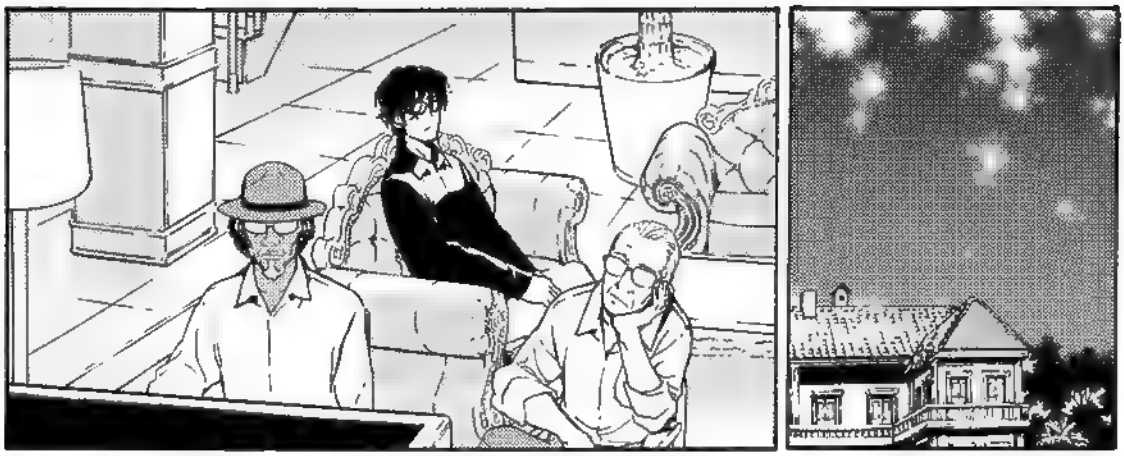


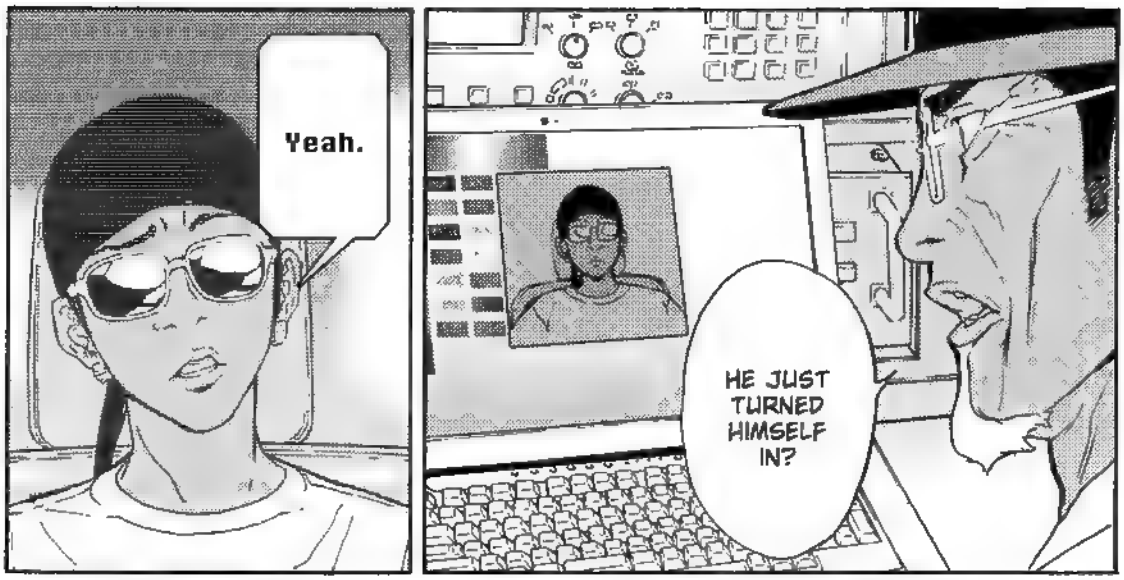
...

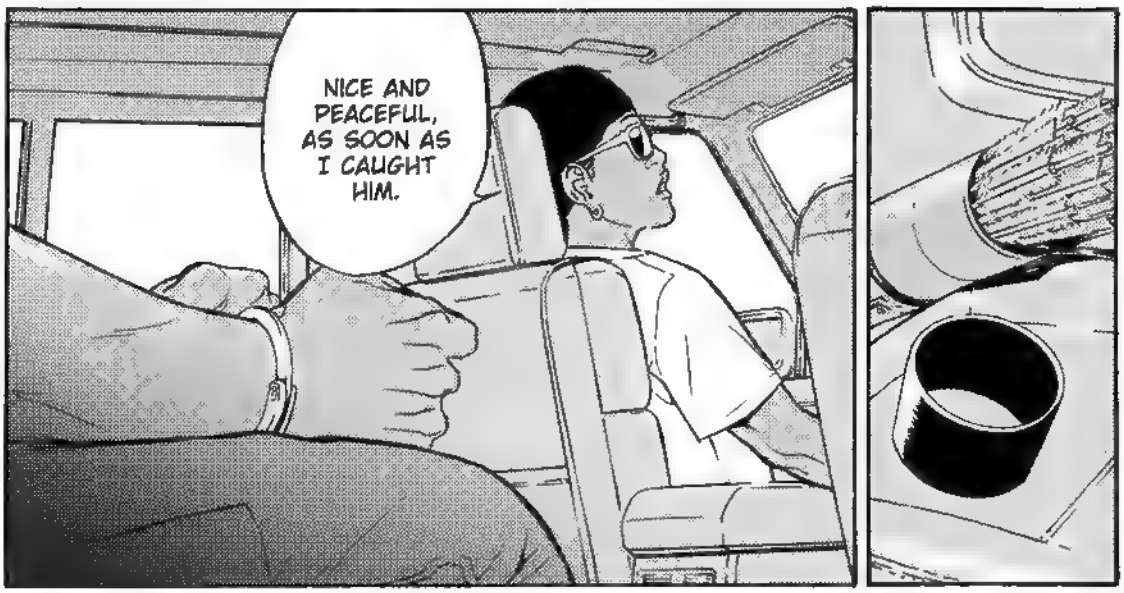
...WHERE DID HE...?

Until
Death
do us
Part


ブォォォォ
BLOOO
(VRRM)
…
…




Yeah.
HE JUST TURNED HIMSELF IN?


NICE AND PEACEFUL, AS SOON AS I CAUGHT HIM.

chapter 190

チラッ
CHIRA (PEEK)
I CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT WITH HIM.
IF YOU'RE BOTHERED BY THAT, I CAN JUST TAKE HIM OUT NOW.
THIS IS PERFECT.
LET'S USE HIM IN THE NEXT STEP OF THE PLAN.
...
THIS SOURCE OF INFORMATION HAS COME RIGHT TO US. NO NEED TO HURRY.
JUST A SECOND ...
OR SO HARUKA PREDICTS, SO WE TURN IT BACK ON HER?

IF IT GOES WELL, WE MIGHT EVEN ACHIEVE THE RESULT YOU HOPED FOR.
KURU (SPIN)
クル…!
NATURALLY.
THOUGH IT DIVERGES FROM THE ORIGINAL PLAN.
!?
AS LONG AS WE ACHIEVE OUR ULTIMATE GOAL, I AM VICTORIOUS.
BUT I'M OF A MIND THAT THIS IS ACCEPTABLE.

BOLD WORDS, COMING FROM YOU.
YOU'RE A TERRIFYING MAN WHO WILL STOP AT NOTHING ...
...
AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY, LET HIM LIVE.
ALL RIGHT.
Word.
...
WHAT'S HE THINKING...?
I'M SURE WISEMAN'S GOT AN IDEA, BUT I'M TOTALLY IN THE DARK OVER HERE.
BUOO (VRRMM)
ブオオオオ

DANTE 313
ブオオオ
BUOOO
ジャッ
JA (SHUU)
KIKI (SCREECH)
KIKI

CHA (CHK)
チャッ
CHA
チャッ
ZA
ZA (ZSH)
I WISH TO SEE MAJOR GIDO TURUS, CHIEF SECURITY OFFICER.
I AM MAJOR MISALT TURUS.

RRRR!
RRRR!
RR!
AMERICA
SPEAK-ING...
C-CO...
COLONEL ZASHID...
...TURUS!?

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEPH...
IT'S BEEN SO LONG...
NO, IT'S LIEUTENANT GENERAL NOW, ISN'T IT?
...THAT YOU OVERSAW TWENTY-TWO YEARS AGO
NOW, THE REASON I'M CALLING IS TO ASCERTAIN SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONFLICT IN GALBOA...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
HOW-EVER...
WHY WOULD YOU ASK THE ENEMY OFFICER THAT AFTER ALL THIS TIME!?
!?
YOU ...
YOU BAS-TARD ...
YOU CAN GO TO HELL...
...KNOW THAT IF YOU ANGER ME, THE UNITED STATES WILL SUFFER LOSSES THAT WILL MAKE 9/11 LOOK LIKE CHILD'S PLAY.

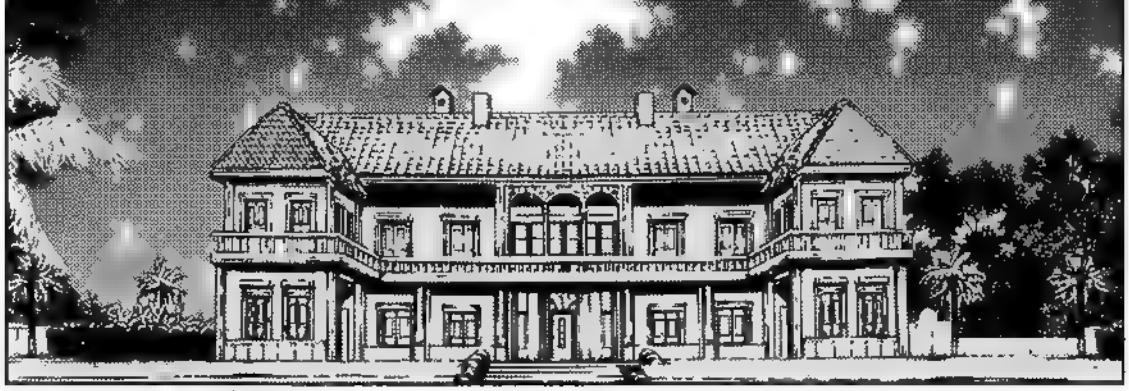
I'LL PRETEND I DIDN'T HEAR THAT.
TON (TAP)
TON
BUT CONSIDER VERY CAREFULLY THAT I AM THE ONE PERSONALLY CONTACTING YOU.
OF COURSE, IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL THAT YOU WOULD DARE TO UNDERESTIMATE THE REACH OF ZASHID TURUS...
THE NAME OF YOUR STRATEGIST IN THAT CONFLICT.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW? JUST ASKING...
I SEEK TO GIVE THE MAN WHO VEXED ME SO SORELY...
...HIS JUST HONOR AND DEATH.
WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THAT INFORMA-TION!?

We did have a college professor along as an observer for the operation ...
That's right. Yes, he shared the name of our third president.
His name was... Thomas Jefferson, I think.
AH-HA... WISEMAN.
!?

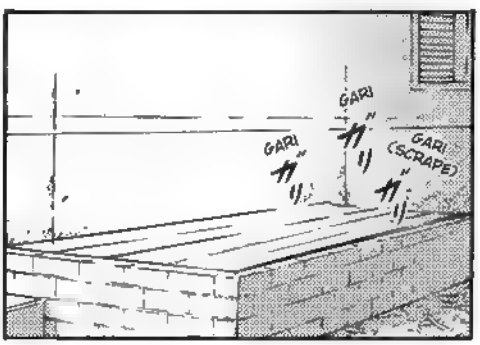
...
Your wise decision has saved the United States' peace of mind.
SLEEP LONG AND WELL.
GOOD-NIGHT, MY FRIEND.
GACHAN (CLANG)
WISEMAN AND HARUKA TOOYAMA...
IF THEY ARE INDEED WORKING TOGETHER ...
...THERE'S NO WONDER MY AMATEUR SONS CANNOT HANDLE THEM.
MUKU (HMPH)

WISEMAN IS ONE THING
BUT IF I JOIN THE PRAY I WILL NEVER HAVE TOOYAMA

I SUPPOSE IT COULD BE WORTH TRYING HOWEVER

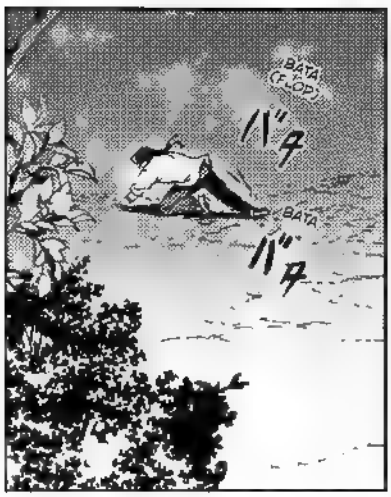


ZUGA
(KRUNCH)


GARI
GARI
GARI
(SCRAPE)

THERE
WE
GO...

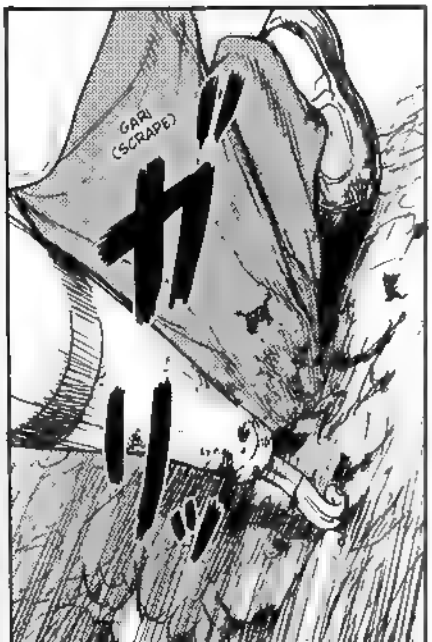
BAKI
BAKI
(CRAK)


BATA
(FLOP)
BATA

ZURU (DRAG)
ズル
ズル

I'LL GET YOU. I'LL SHOW YOU ALL...
...SHIT...
SHIT, SHIT, SHIT!!

AS GOD IS MY WITNESS, I WILL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU!!

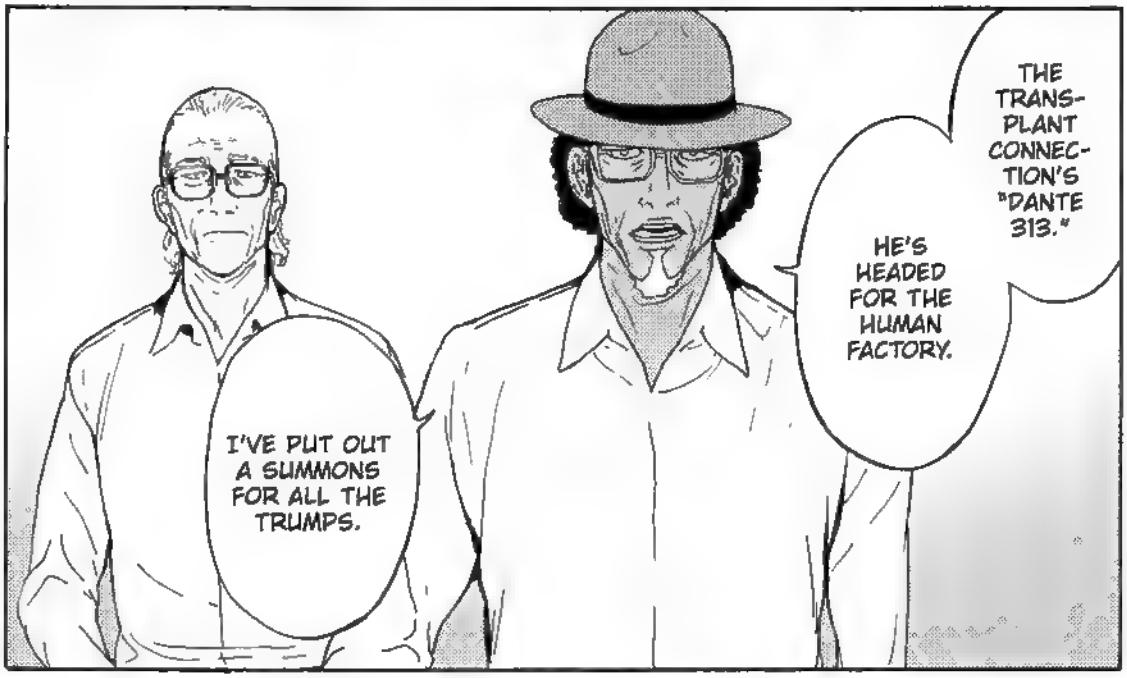

GARI (SCRAPE)
カ"
"

BUT NOT RIGHT NOW.
WHAT!?
SOUNDS GOOD.
WE'RE NOT STUPID ENOUGH TO JUST LET YOU GET AWAY.
WE JUST FIGURED THAT IF YOUR ESCAPE ATTEMPT ENDED IN FAILURE, YOU MIGHT GIVE IT UP FOR GOOD.
YOU KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING, AND LET ME GET AWAY WITH IT!?
WHA— YOU!?
OF COURSE WE DID.
...!!

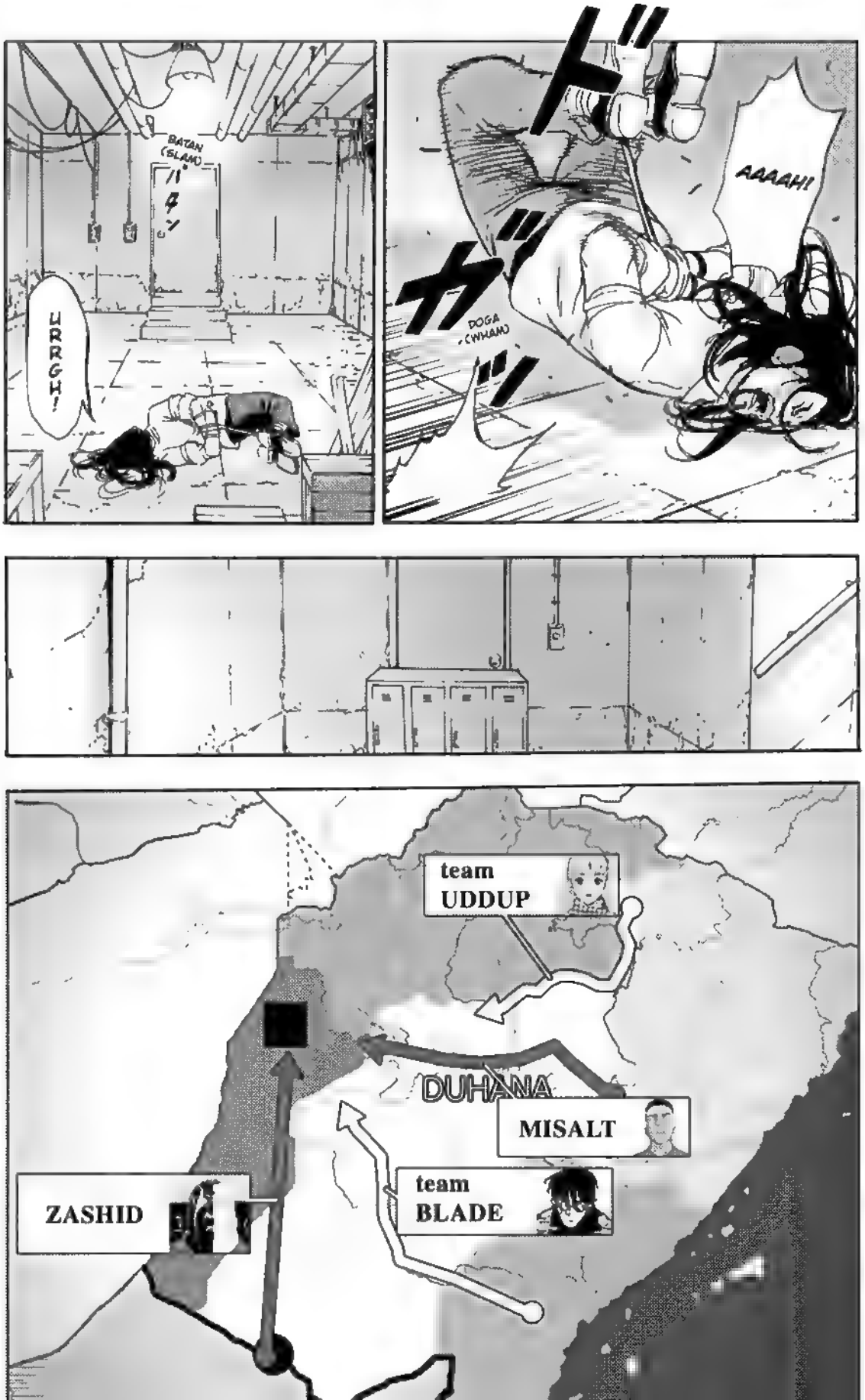
YOU'RE TREATING HIM TOO ROUGH.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?
PLAYING WHACK-A-MOLE.
ZUZUZU (DRAG)
MORE GENTLE, LIKE THAT.
PFF!
HRRGH!
AAAGH !!
DOKA (WHAM)
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
EVERY-ONE ELSE IS OUT ON CLANDESTINE WORK, RIGHT?
YOU'RE JOINING US ON A SORTIE NOW.

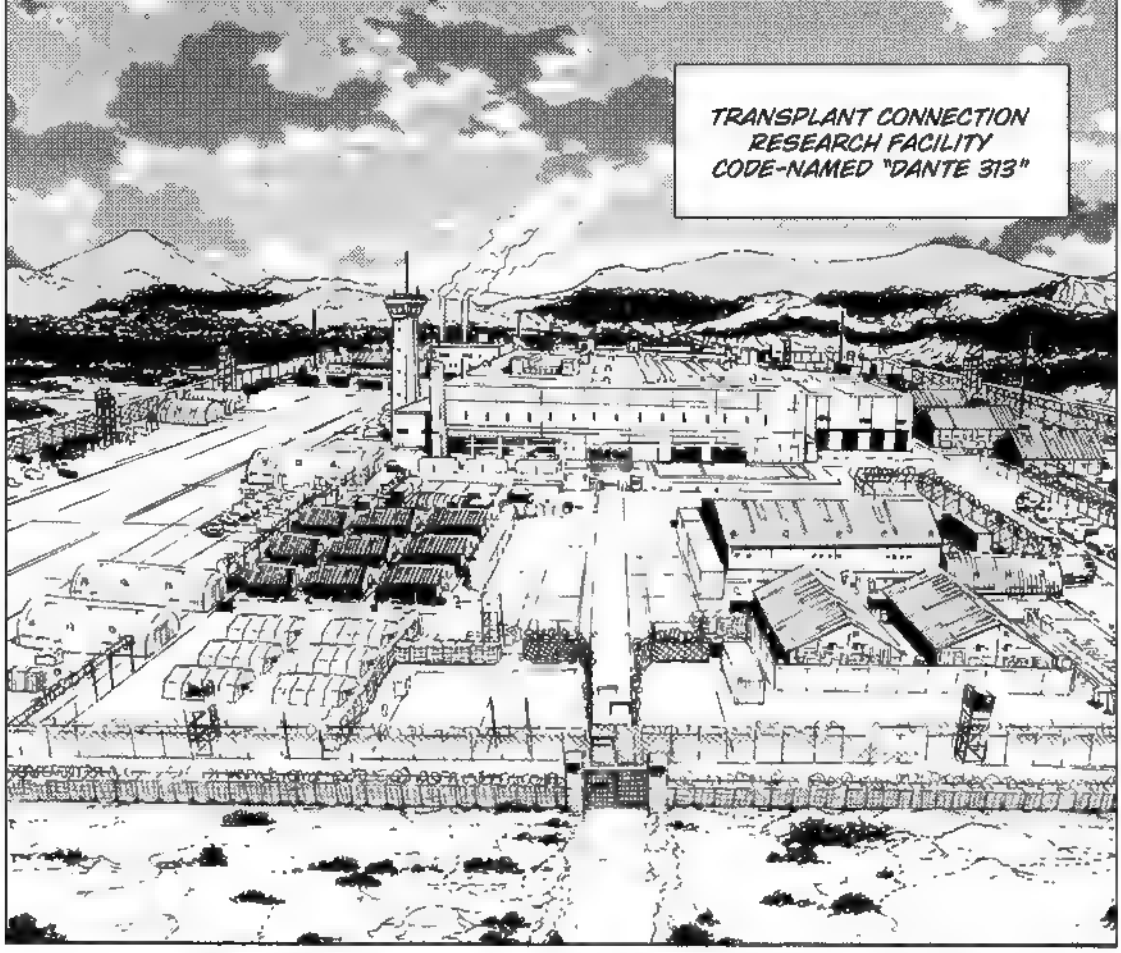
ZASHID'S ON THE MOVE.
KIKI (SCREECH)
BA
BA
BA
BA (THUPPA)

HUH!?


I'VE PUT OUT A SUMMONS FOR ALL THE TRUMPS.
HE'S HEADED FOR THE HUMAN FACTORY.
THE TRANS-PLANT CONNEC-TION'S "DANTE 313."

...
... SOUNDS GOOD ...
HE'S ALL YOURS. DO WHATEVER YOU LIKE.


BATAN (SLAM)
URRGH!
AAAAH!
DOGA (WHAM)
team UDDUP
DUHANA
MISALT
team BLADE
ZASHID


TRANSPLANT CONNECTION
RESEARCH FACILITY
CODE-NAMED "DANTE 313"

ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)
ゴッ
ゴッ
...
HEY, BROTHER ...

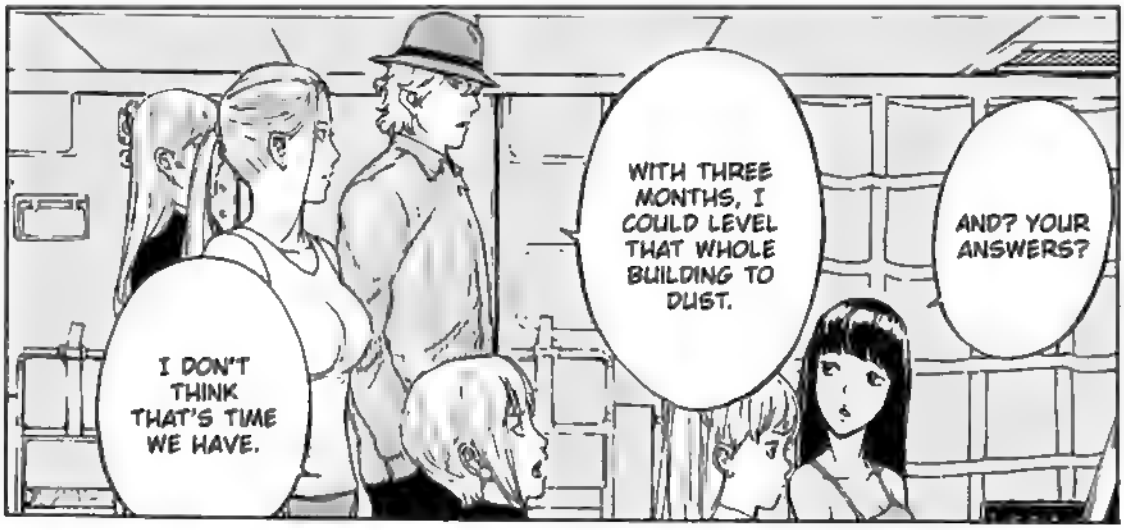
chapter 191
WELCOME TO THE FACTORY OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

OH, YOU CAN TELL?
...TO TAKE THAT AS AN ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION, GIDO?
AM I MEANT...
HE GOT BORED WITH IT...
...AND IT ENDED UP OVERSHADOWING THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT.
BUT THE RED OF THE FLAMES WAS REAL INTERESTING...
ACTUALLY, I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THAT.
I'VE GOT ORDERS FROM DAD.
THIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN EDGE'S JOB. HE WAS ALWAYS THE HONOR STUDENT.
DOSU (THUMP)
ドス
DAD'S A REAL JERK TO KEEP ME TRAPPED IN A PROVINCIAL SLUM LIKE THIS.
HOW CAN HE JUST SHUT ME UP IN THIS PLACE?

...OH...
WE CAN'T DISOBEY.
...AND HE'S NOT AFRAID OF DAD, FOR WHATEVER REASON.
THE PROBLEM WITH THIS GUY IS THAT THERE'S A SCREW LOOSE IN HIS HEAD ...
IF HE GOES OFF SCRIPT AND SENDS THE PLAN DOWN IN FLAMES...
...I'LL BE STUCK WITH HIM.
BUT NOTHING GOOD HAS EVER COME FROM HIS ORDERS...

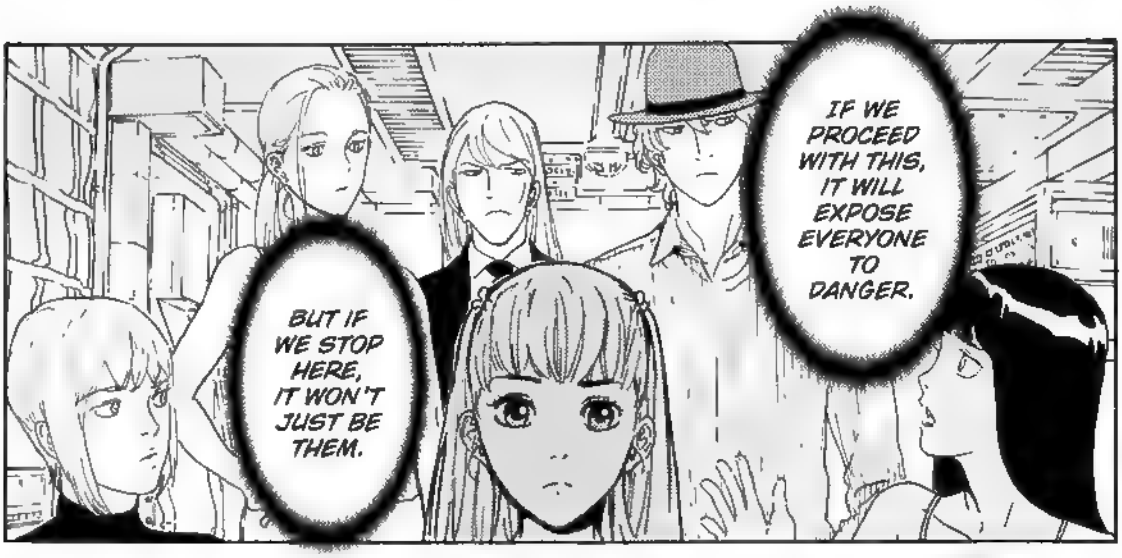
JIII
(ZZZT)
THOROUGH SECURITY TOO. WE'RE WAY UNDER-POWERED TO TAKE IT ON.
THAT'S A HUGE PLANT...
...

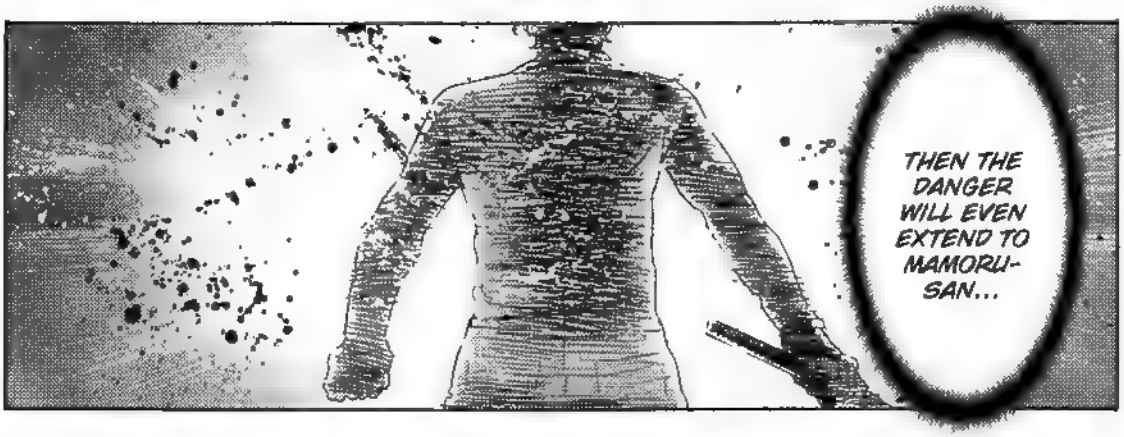
...
...
DO WE HAVE ENOUGH GUNPOWDER? WHAT'S THE MOST EFFICIENT DESTRUCTION POINT?
WHAT KIND OF TRICKS DO I NEED TO EMPLOY TO PULL IT OFF? THOSE ARE THE ONLY ISSUES FOR ME.
YOU DON'T SEEM PARTICULARLY CONCERNED.
I'M A DEMOLITION SPECIALIST. THE ONLY RELEVANT POINT IS SIZE, NOT SECURITY.

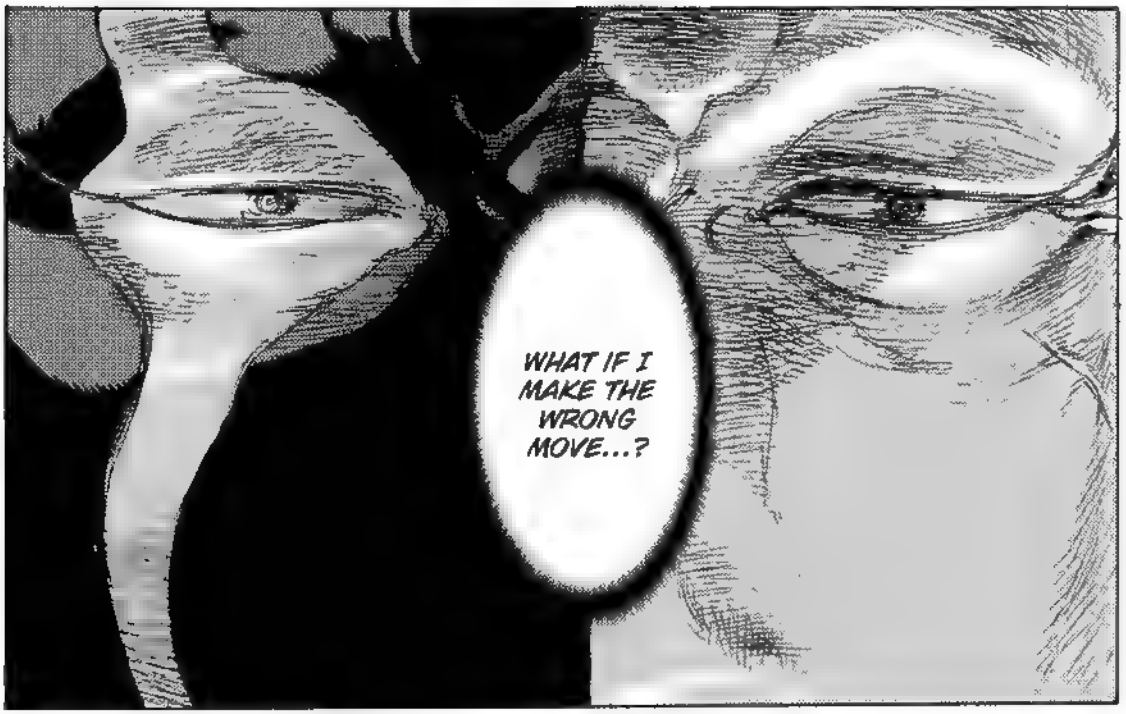

I DON'T THINK THAT'S TIME WE HAVE.
WITH THREE MONTHS, I COULD LEVEL THAT WHOLE BUILDING TO DUST.
AND? YOUR ANSWERS?

VERY TRUE.
...

...SHOULD I?


IF WE PROCEED WITH THIS, IT WILL EXPOSE EVERYONE TO DANGER.
BUT IF WE STOP HERE, IT WON'T JUST BE THEM.


THEN THE DANGER WILL EVEN EXTEND TO MAMORU-SAN...


WHAT IF I MAKE THE WRONG MOVE...?

WE'RE DOING THIS!
SURE THING
WHO NOD
フッ

THE FEWER OF US THERE ARE, THE HIGHER PERCENTAGE EACH ONE OF US REPRESENTS...
BUT I SUPPOSE I'LL PLAY ALONG WITH THE IDIOT THIS TIME.
I KNOW WE'VE BEEN UNDERMANNED FROM THE START...
...BUT LOSING ONE PERSON AT THIS POINT ISN'T GOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
KACHA (CLINK)
KACHA
OOOH...
REALLY?
I'LL MAKE A DISH I PICKED UP WHILE ON DUTY IN PAKISTAN THIS TIME.
YES, HE'S RIGHT. LET'S JUST GET THIS OVER WITH SO WE CAN HAVE ANOTHER MEAL.
I FIGURED YOU WERE JUST AN EATER.
OH, REALLY?
YOU CAN COOK!?
...WHAT?
OF COURSE I CAN. WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?

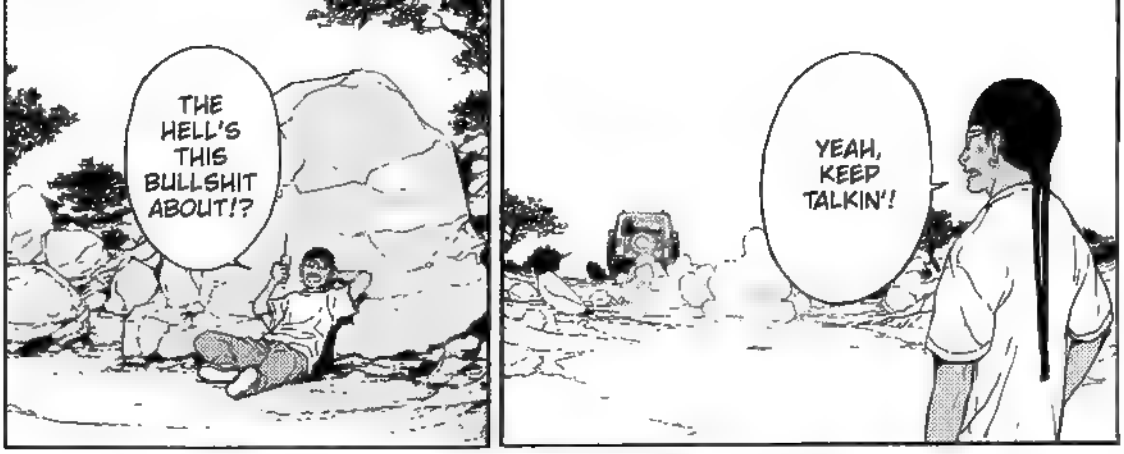
HMM? WHAT IS IT?
I have a message for Mamoru Hijikata.
ブオオオ
BUOOO (VRRRM)
HARUKA WOULDN'T FAIL TO SEE BETRAYAL ON HIS PART...
I FIGURED AS MUCH.
They have timed it so you cannot get there in time. You are supposed to sit back and watch us go.
The team is going to raid Dante 313 soon.

I'VE GIVEN YOU THE MESSAGE.
?
!?
THEY'RE GETTING THE JUMP ON US...
...AND TESTING ZASHID TURUS'S STRENGTH.
...WHO DOES THAT LITTLE GIRL...THINK SHE IS...?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
GU (CLENCH)
GU
HUH !?
BUT WHY!?

BEFORE I LEFT, SHE TOLD ME...
SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
SHOT-SAN...
IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY..
!?
...DON'T PUT OUR NEEDS FIRST. JUST DO WHAT YOUR HEART TELLS YOU TO DO.
...IF I ABANDONED A LITTLE GIRL LIKE THAT?
WHAT KIND OF A MAN WOULD I BE...
CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?

I ASSUME YOU'RE SAYING THESE COOL-GUY LINES KNOWING WHO WE'RE UP AGAINST, RIGHT!?
AND IF I CAN'T SAVE ONE GIRL, HOW CAN I SAVE A COUNTRY?
TSK...
All right. Do it.
!?
I can imagine who is coming...
But of course, I can't do much of anything without your permission, given my circum-stances.
AW, C'MON, I JUST GOT HIM...
N'Sinh, let him go and give him back his weapon.

I'M GOING TO BORROW THE VEHICLE TOO.
WITH YOUR TALENT, IT SHOULD BE EASY TO CATCH HIM AGAIN.
W-well, yeah, but...
Tsk!
GACHA (CLICK)
I've got Tibor deployed nearby.
FINE, WHATEVER!!
BUOOOO (VRRRM)
WE CAN FINISH OUR FIGHT WHEN THAT HAPPENS.
WON'T CATCH ME WITH THE SAME TRICK TWICE THOUGH.
YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY DID BEAT ME GOOD.
WHEN THIS MISSION IS OVER, I'M BACK ON THE TRUMPS.


THE HELL'S THIS BULLSHIT ABOUT!?
YEAH, KEEP TALKIN'!

THEY'RE ABOUT TO START FIGHTING WHERE ZASHID TURUS IS HEADING.

ARE... ARE YOU FOR REAL!?
Zashid will likely join the fight.
WHAT ?

BUT OUR ARRIVAL IS ESTIMATED AT EIGHT HOURS.
What- ever you want.
CAN I GO CHECK IT OUT ONCE TIBOR GETS HERE?
YEAH, I KNOW.
Buzz Vrrr
ブオオオ
Elan
Dai
Ashe
JULIET
PAUSE

I MIGHT BE AGAINST FIGHTING HIM...

...BUT IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING, YOU WILL END UP FACING OFF WITH ZASHID TURUS.
AND IF YOU FIGHT HIM, YOU WILL DIE.
AT THIS RATE, AT LEAST— WITHOUT ANY PREPA-RATION.

I'VE GOT TO HELP PROVIDE SUPPORT ...
...UNTIL I CAN GET US TO THE POINT OF TOTAL DIS-RUPTION

NOW THAT WE'RE ABOUT TO FIGHT, EVERYONE IS PREPARED FOR THE WORST.
IT'S TIME TO SUCK IT UP, I'M AFRAID.

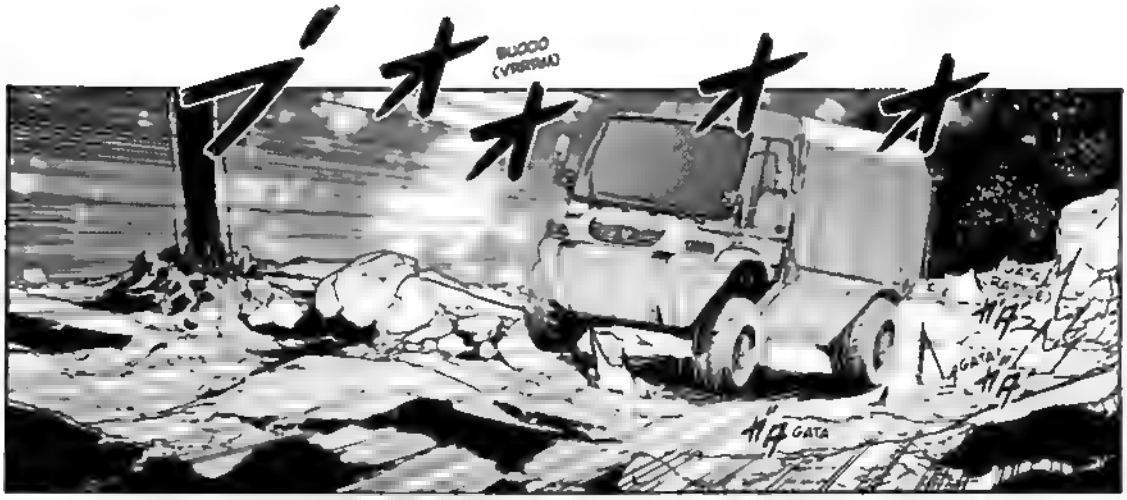
...MISS...

OKAY

ドド
ドド
ァァァァァ

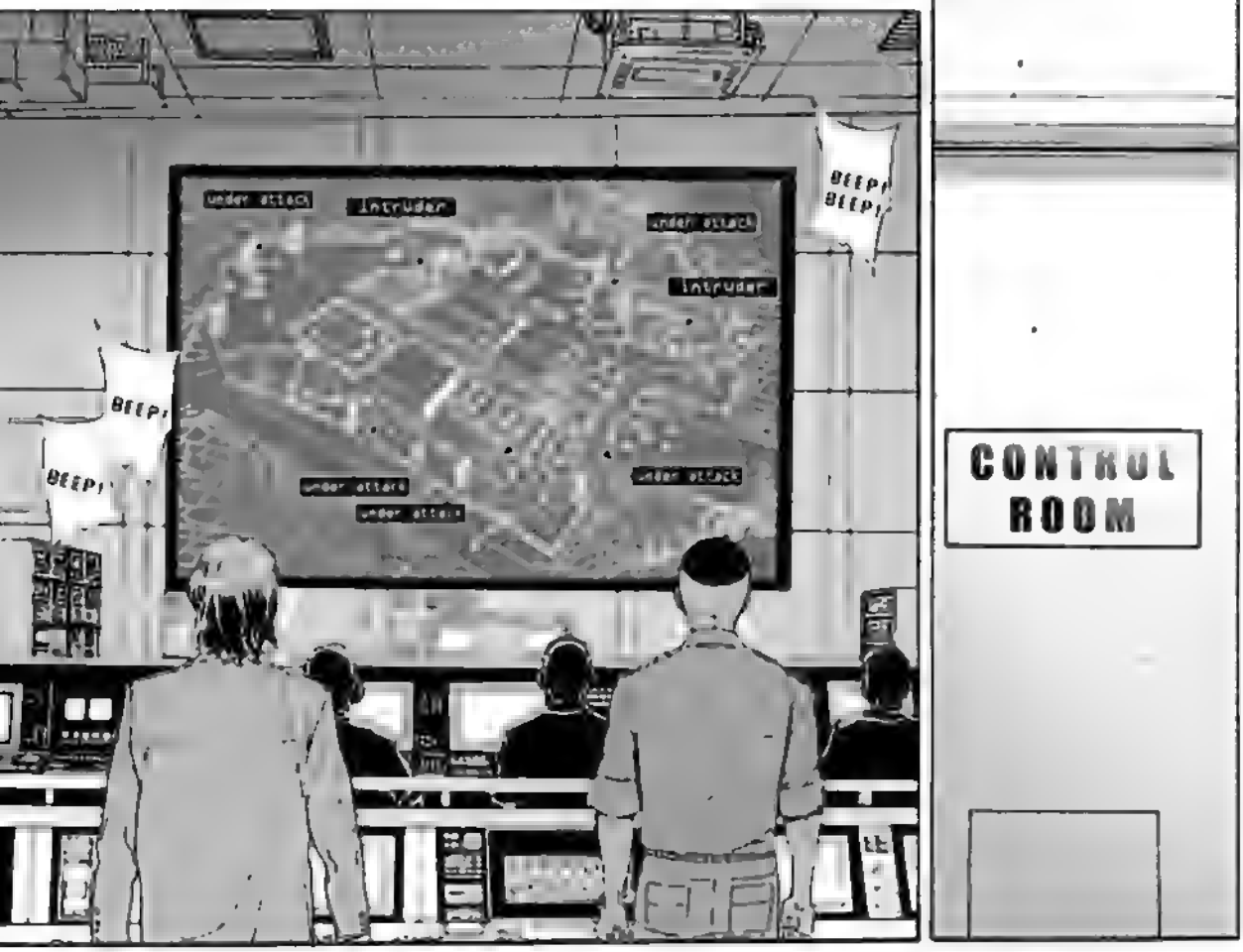
SO THEY'VE BEGUN...

バ バ バ
バ バ バ
TAKE ME TO THE CONTROL ROOM
I WILL OBSERVE THE COMMAND

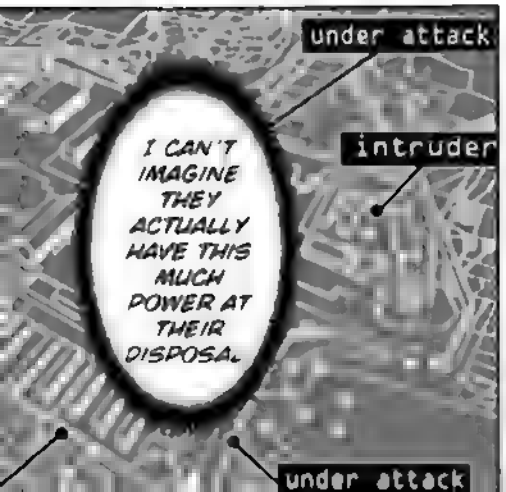

BUOOO (VROOM)

...THIS IS BAD, MAN...

ZASHID'S TARGET IS HARUKA TOOYAMA HERSELF!
REAL BAD NEWS...


under attack
intruder
under attack
intruder
under attack
under attack
under attack
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!
CONTROL ROOM

BUT SOME-THING'S NOT RIGHT

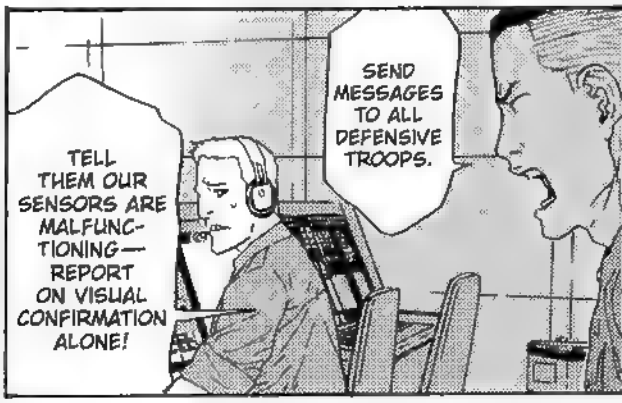

under attack
intruder
I CAN'T IMAGINE THEY ACTUALLY HAVE THIS MUCH POWER AT THEIR DISPOSAL
under attack

WH-WHAT IS THIS!? THEY'VE ALREADY BREACHED US ALL OVER!!
I TOLD YOU, THIS ENEMY IS FAR GREATER THAN YOU REALIZE.

DON'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY!
THAT DATA IS FALSE!

HOW COULD ANYONE BREAK THROUGH OUR COMPUTER SECURITY AND SEND FALSE SIGNALS LIKE THIS!?
ARE YOU CRAZY!? THIS IS THE TPC AND GALBOA'S STATE-OF-THE-ART DEFENSE!

IGNORE THAT ORDER!
I WILL BE CALLING THE SHOTS.


SEND MESSAGES TO ALL DEFENSIVE TROOPS.
TELL THEM OUR SENSORS ARE MALFUNC-TIONING— REPORT ON VISUAL CONFIRMATION ALONE!

WE CANNOT ALLOW A POOR DECISION BY YOU TO LEAD TO A THIRD LOST OPPORTUNITY.
I'M ONLY KEEPING THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOME IN MIND...
ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING? THEY'VE ALREADY GOTTEN THE BEST OF ME TWICE.

chapter 132

LITTLE MISALT NEEDS TO LEARN HIS PLACE.
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT— THIS JERK IS GIVING HIS OWN ORDERS TO MY SECURITY TEAM.
...
BA (HUP)

IF YOU WANT TO COMPLAIN, YOU'RE BITCHING TO THE WRONG MAN!
HEY, DAD FORCED ME TO TAKE THIS STUPID POSITION!
THE WOULD-BE RUFFIAN WHO CAN'T FOLLOW SIMPLE PROTOCOL?
OH... YOU'RE GOING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT ME, ARE YOU?

WHAT —!?

IT SEEMS YOU BRATS HAVE GROWN RATHER FULL OF YOUR-SELVES.

SINCE WHEN...
...WERE YOU TWO SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU COULD SQUABBLE LIKE THIS IN MY PRESENCE?

LET'S SEE JUST HOW MUCH YOU'VE GROWN, THEN.

LEAD THE BATTLE AND DISPATCH THE ENEMY YOURSELVES
I WILL TAKE COMMAND OF THE DEFENSE

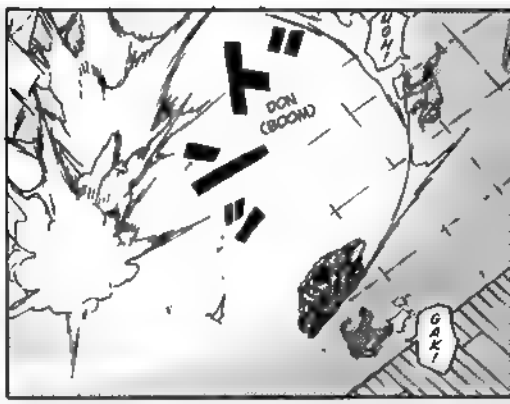
TH-THAT'S NOT THE RIGHT WAY, EXCEL-LENCY.
KO (TOK)
KO
ドドドド
ドドドド
SIR! BUT...
...IT'S DANGEROUS HERE. A STRAY BULLET MIGHT—
NO, THIS IS GOOD.

Y-YES, SIR.
DO NOT BOTHER ME, AND DON'T BOTHER REPORTING TO GIDO AND MISALT.
THIS IS MY LOFTY PERCH.

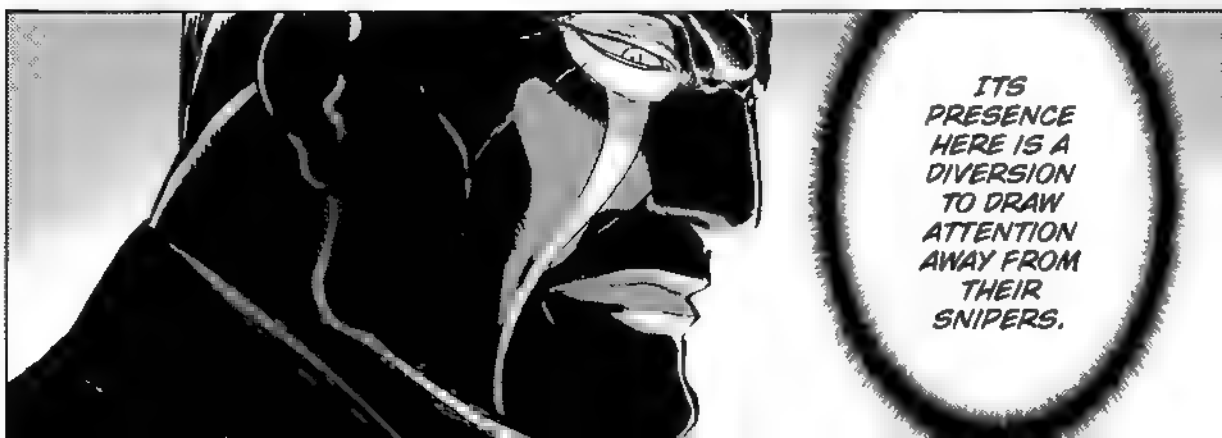
...FROM FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE?
NOW, WHAT WILL I OBSERVE ...
YAAA-HOO!!

I'VE SEVERED THE FENCE!
POWER LINE'S BEEN INTER-RUPTED!
Roger.

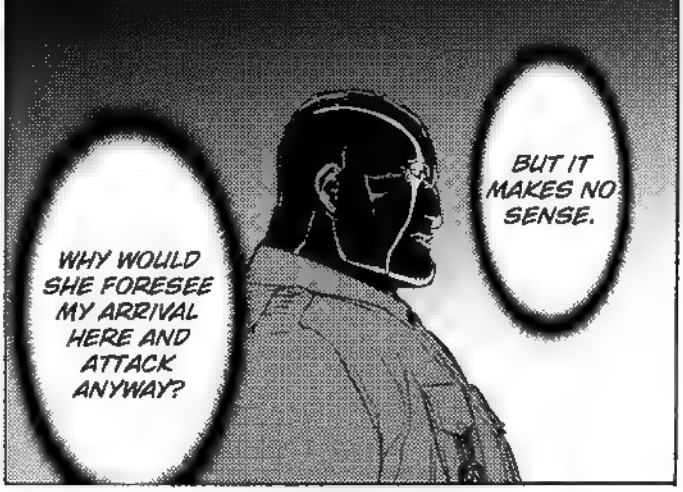
...THAT'S THE COMBAT BIKE FROM THE REPORT...


DON (BOOM)
GAK!

TA
TA (TAT)


ITS PRESENCE HERE IS A DIVERSION TO DRAW ATTENTION AWAY FROM THEIR SNIPERS.

AND THEN...
BASU
BASU (BSHT)
THAT DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS WISE-MAN'S STYLE.
THEY ARE INCAPACI-TATING, NOT KILLING.
THE FIGHTERS ARRIVE.
BUT VERY LOW IN NUMBER.


WHY WOULD SHE FORESEE MY ARRIVAL HERE AND ATTACK ANYWAY?
BUT IT MAKES NO SENSE.

I SUSPECT HARUKA TOOYAMA IS THEIR COM-MANDER, THEN.

...I WILL ENSURE THAT HER OPERATION HAS NOT THE TINIEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS.
...BUT NO MATTER HOW ACCURATE HER PRE-DICTIONS...
MY FOOLISH SONS CAN EASILY BE OUTWITTED ...

WHAT IS IT, EXCEL-LENCY?
HMM?

THIS AMUSES ME.
VERY WELL.

I WILL NOT ALLOW ANY MAN TO INTERFERE WITH DANTE 313!

RASHID
TURUS?
AND I'VE NEVER FELT SUCH AN OVERWHELMING PRESENCE
I SEE
YES HE'S NO JOKE

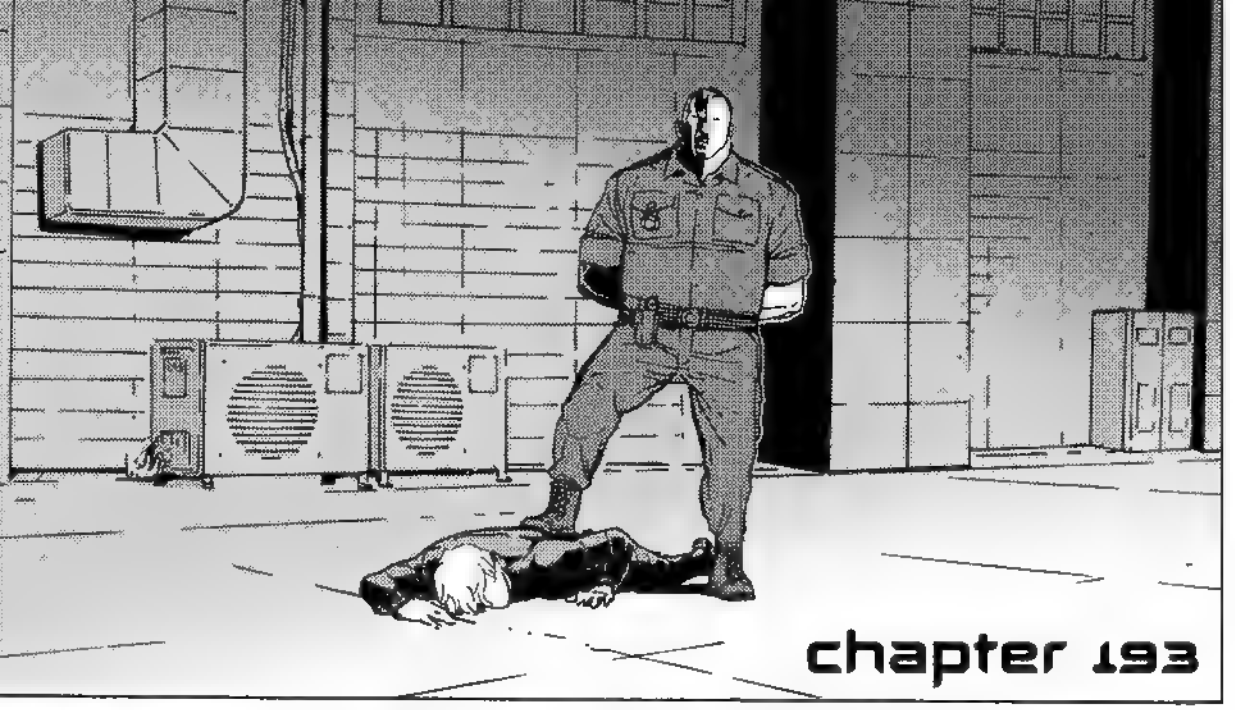
THE FUTURE OF GALBOA AND DUHANA RESTS UPON THIS FACILITY.
CHI (CLIK)
ZUBO (THUP)
THIS ISN'T A GUY I CAN BEAT IN A HEAD-ON FIGHT...
WELL, GREAT...
BO
BO (BOOM)
WE'LL CONTINUE THIS CHAT LATER.

WHA —!?
...YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE ME.
HRGH

FUWA
(WHOOSH)
HOW IS THIS POS-SIBLE !?
DOS!
(THUMP)
GUH !!

GAHK !!
GA (STOMP)
I'VE GOT A DECENT AMOUNT OF COMBAT TRAINING, AND HE'S PINNING ME DOWN THROUGH SHEER FORCE!
I... CAN'T MOVE!
TELL HARUKA TOOYAMA...
... THAT SHE HAS FIVE MINUTES.
MY TWO WORTHLESS SONS WILL BE FIGHTING BACK SOON.
IT IS POINT-LESS.
URRGH!

IF SHE DOES NOT FLEE IN THAT TIME
I WILL CAPTURE HER MYSELF!
YOU. MONSTER


chapter 193

CAN YOU HEAR ME, HARUKA TOOYAMA!? YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES.

ギリ…
GIRI (GRIT)

BACK-UP!?
PYRO-SAN! YOUR BACKUP'S COMING!
!?

ZA (SHAP)
STICK MODE!
GU (HRG)
DA (DASH)
DA
DA

chapter 193

BASHA (SWASH)
A WOMAN...

ALL UNITS, PREPARE TO EVACUATE!
ZASHID'S HERE!!

YOU IDIOT! YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN HANDLE HIM ALONE!?
GET OUTTA HERE!!
NO...
I WILL LAND A BLOW ON HIM...
KEEP YOUR JOKES TO YOUR-SELF !!
BUT I CONSIDER MYSELF TO BE GENTLE WITH WOMEN.
YOU HAVE A CHOICE—SUBMIT OBEDIENTLY OR DIE PAINLESSLY.
YOU CANNOT KILL ME WITH BLUNT WEAPONS.
I WOULD NOT HOLD OUT SUCH PREPOS-TEROUS HOPE.

SHU (SWISH)
ZA (ZSHH)

...
YOU WILL NEVER REACH ME AT THIS RATE.
ZA
THIS IS TOO SLOW AND DULL.

IN FACT, IT IS HUMANLY IMPOSSIBLE. I'LL GUARANTEE THAT.
YES, SIR.
MEANING THAT IF YOU USE THE COMBINATION WE JUST DEVELOPED, IN THEORY, EVEN MAMORU CANNOT AVOID IT ENTIRELY.
AS LONG AS PEOPLE USE TWO HANDS AND STAND ON TWO FEET...
...THERE'S A LIMIT TO ANY FOE'S SPEED AND REACTION TIME.

AN UNEXPECTED SNEAK ATTACK WILL ONLY WORK ONCE.
BUT...
...THAT ONLY APPLIES TO THE FIRST BLOW.
HUH?
TIME THE MOMENT...
...FOR MAXIMUM EFFECT...
YOU MUST CAREFULLY AND PRECISELY TIME THE MOMENT FOR MAXIMUM EFFECT.
ONCE THE TRICK IS KNOWN, AN EXPERIENCED FOE WILL RECOGNIZE IT THEREAFTER AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY.
WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN PULL IT OFF, AND WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN TIME IT.
YES. THE KEY TO VICTORY LIES IN WHETHER THE TIMING OF YOUR ATTACK CAN BE ANTICIPATED OR NOT.

GA (VOOM)
GU (ZWIP)
GA

NOW!
BALL MODE!
ZA (VSSHH)
ZA!

SHE GOT HIM IN THE GUT!

GASHU (GSHHK)

GASHU
(GRUNK)

SHE GOT HIM IN THE GUT!

GA (THUD)
GA
GA
IT CAN'T BE...
HOW ...!?
A VERY IMPRESSIVE EVOLVING COMBINATION ATTACK.
A NORMAL PERSON WOULD BE TOTALLY UNABLE TO AVOID IT.
...
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE SOMEONE TOUCHED ME IN A CLOSE-COMBAT FIGHT.
ZA (ZSH)

GRRG
BUT SADLY, THIS IS THE BEST IT CAN DO WHEN EXECUTED BY AN INEXPERIENCED FRAIL WOMAN
NO DOUBT ITS INVENTOR WAS A RENOWNED FIGHTER.

YOUR FATAL MISTAKE WAS NOT STRIKING THE SOLAR PLEXUS AS YOU SHOULD HAVE!
UGH

YOU ARE A RANK AMATEUR UNABLE TO MATCH MY SPEED!!

IF YOU HAD ANOTHER SIXTY POUNDS, YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN THROWN BACKWARD
AS A FULL-STRENGTH MALE, YOU MIGHT HAVE DONE ENOUGH DAMAGE TO SEND ME TO MY KNEES

I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT HE'S RIGHT. AND SOMEHOW HE ASSESSED ALL OF THAT IN THE MOMENT AND TOOK MY ATTACK ANY-WAY...
HE'S A TRUE MONSTER!!
WILL IT BE SURRENDER? OR DEATH?
NOW CHOOSE!
VERY WELL... I WILL MAKE IT INSTANTA-NEOUS, SO YOU DON'T SUFFER.
...

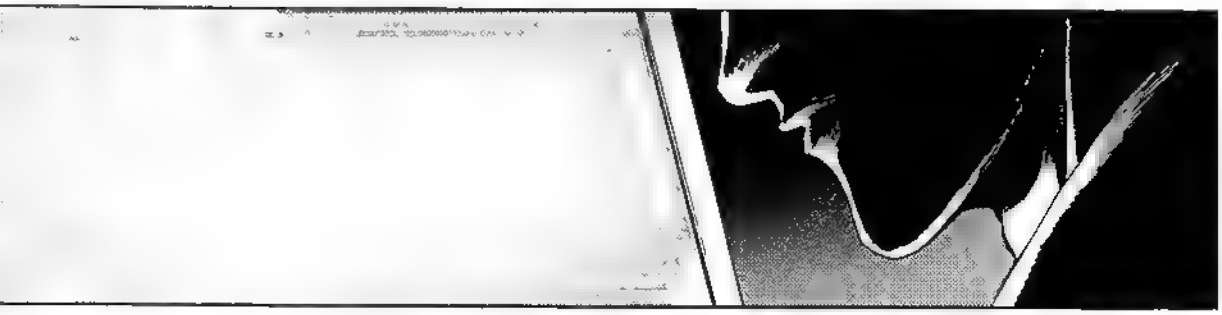
IF HIJIKATA'S A DEMON OF THE BLADE, HE'S A DEMON OF COMBAT ITSELF...WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS! HE'S INHUMAN! NO ONE CAN FIGHT HIM!
KIKI (SCREECH)
MY NEXT OPPONENT...

THE HEAD-LINER HAS ARRIVED.
YOU'RE GOING TO ACCEPT MY CHALLENGE NEXT.
VERY WELL. HOWEVER ...
?
IT MAKES NO SENSE... IF MISALT AND GIDO ARE FIGHTING, THE ENEMY'S MAIN UNIT SHOULD HAVE ITS HANDS FULL, NOT BE SHOWING UP HERE.
...
WHAT ARE THOSE IDIOT BOYS DOING !?

...
...
THANKS TO THIS DORK...
!?
WHAT HAPPENED !?

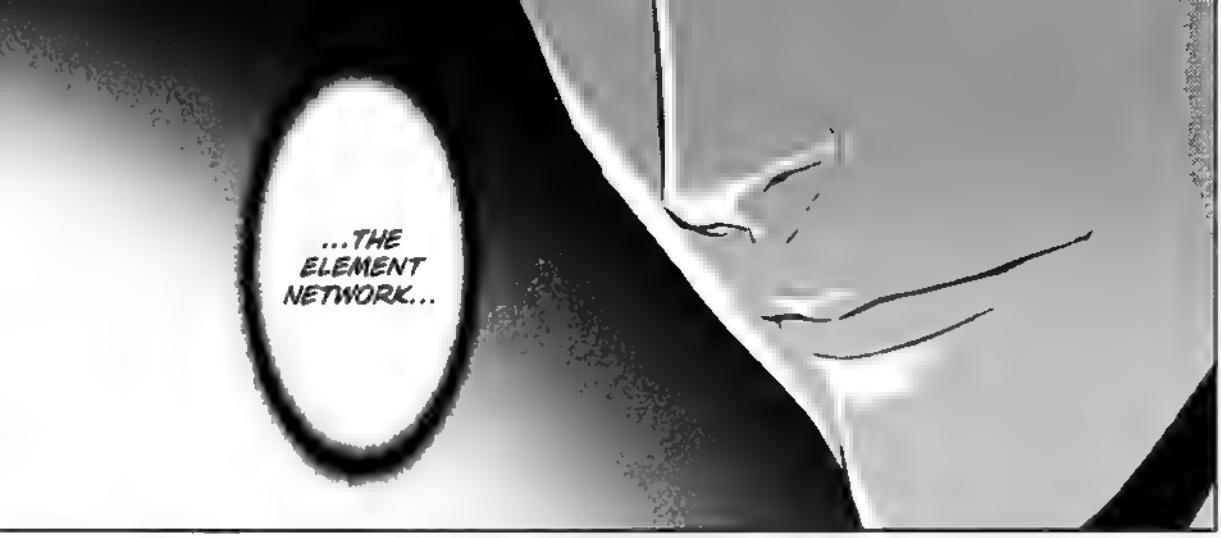
DA (DASH)
AN INTRUDER !?
HEY, SOMEONE'S INSIDE! SEND A WHOLE TEAM THIS WAY!
THE MOST IMPORTANT LOCATION NEARBY IS...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?
THAT'S THE DATA ROOM— IT'S—
TA (TEK)
TA
DATA ROOM

SHH!
HE'S IN THERE?
ガチャ
WHO GOES THERE!?



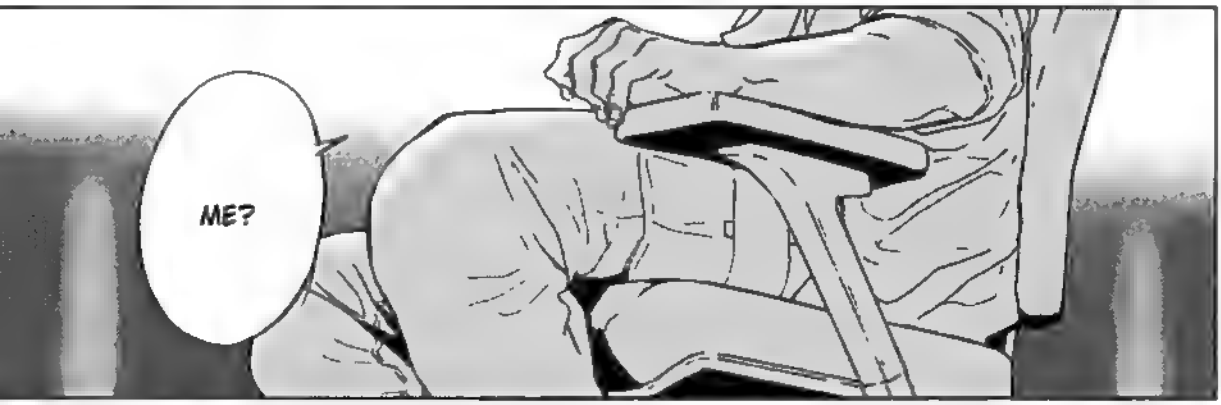
HOW DID YOU BREAK THROUGH OUR SECURITY!?
WHAT'S HE LOOKING AT!?

SECURITY? THANKFULLY, THERE WAS NO SUCH THING HERE.
WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
I SUSPECT IT WAS STILL UNLOCKED FROM WHEN OUR SECURITY SYSTEMS WERE GETTING FALSE DATA.
SO I CAN JUST BROWSE ANYTHING I WANT.


...THE ELEMENT NETWORK...

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!?

TSK!


ME?

I...

AM A DEBT COLLECTOR.
IT'S TIME FOR THE TPE TO CLOSE OUT IT'S TAB

CHA (CLICK)
YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!
IF YOU START SHOOTING IN HERE, IT COULD THREATEN THE ENTIRE CLONING PLANT!
chapter 194

ARE YOU... JESUS!?
SO I MADE AN EMERGENCY CHANGE OF PLANS AND CAME IN HERE TO GLEAN SOME SECRETS.
AND THEN THIS DUSTUP HAPPENS.
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'VE BEEN CASING THIS PLACE FOR FOUR DAYS TO STRIKE THIS EXACT SPOT.

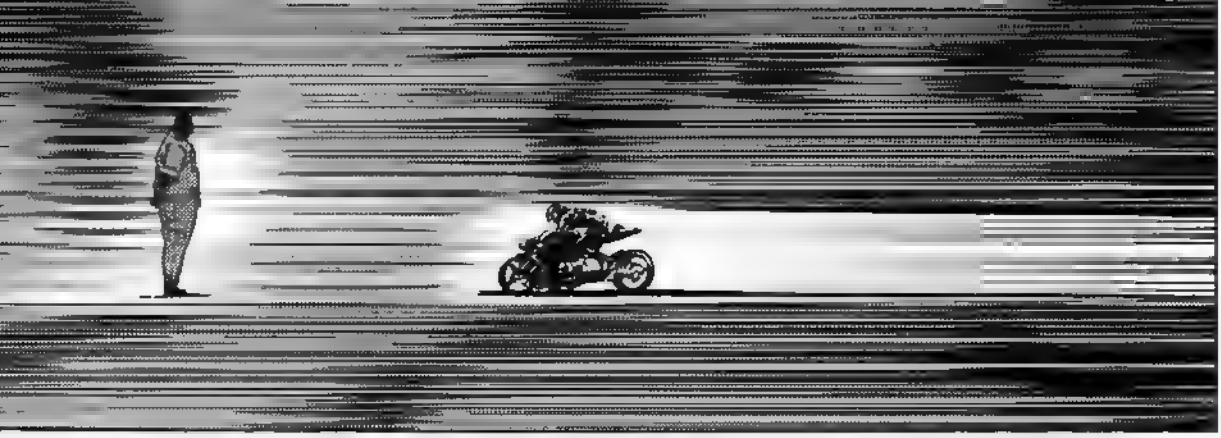
I SEEK TO DESTROY THE TRANSPLANT CONNECTION. I DON'T CARE ABOUT ZASHID AND HIS SONS.
IF YOU DON'T BOTHER ME, I MIGHT EVEN LET YOU GO.
JESUS? WHY ARE YOU HERE!?
?
ASSUMING...
...PUPIL...?
...THAT YOU DON'T HURT MY PUPIL OUT FRONT!

=chapter 194

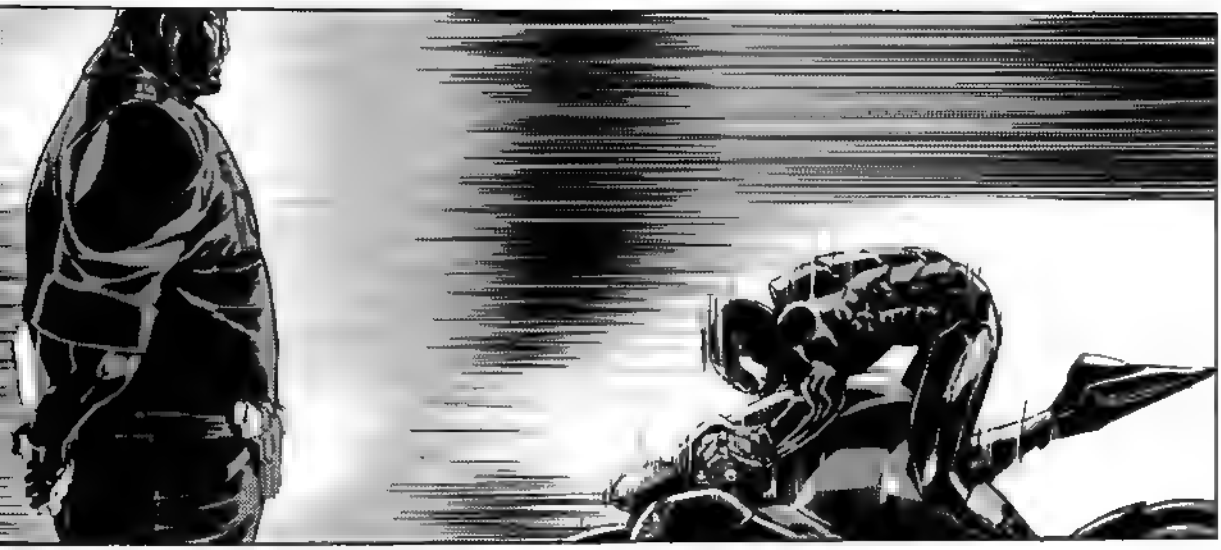
I SEE...
SO HE'S THE ROOT OF THE EVIL HERE...
ANY FEAR, AND IT'S THE END FOR ME!!
I AM NOT INTER-ESTED IN SIDESHOW ACTS...
...BUT AS THIS IS PART OF THE ENTERTAINMENT, WELL...
WHO YOU CALL-ING...

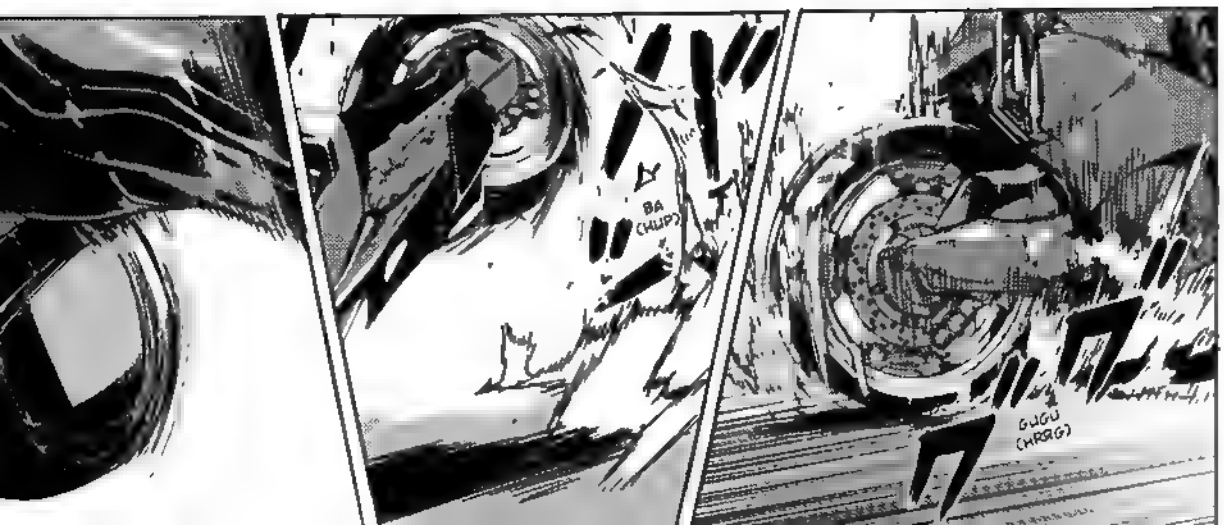
...A SIDE-SHOW !?
HMPH
GA (CRSH)

TSK!!
YOU CANNOT STRIKE ME WITH SUCH OBVIOUS MOVES.
RIGHT... SO UNLESS I TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE, HE'LL SEE EVERYTHING COMING A MILE AWAY...



SON OF A BITCH!!




BA (HUP)
GUGU (HRRG)

BRRM
VVVROOM
TAKE THIS!
AHH...

GAGA (GRAKK)
I MUST TAKE BACK MY PREVIOUS WORDS.
WHAT !?
ZAZAZA (ZZSH)

YOU ARE WORTHY OF A PROPER CIRCUS.
I COULD GET YOU A PERFORMANCE LICENSE IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF ZOTT
YOU COCKY PUNK!!
Calm down, Dai!
SHUT UP!!
103

GUH!
DOGA (THWAM)
SHUUU (FSHH)
WHY DIDN'T ... MY SUIT ...
... ABSORB THAT...?
IS IT NOT ADDING UP, BOY?
THAT IS THE WEAKNESS OF BULLETPROOF SUITS OF THAT SORT.

...IS WELL MORE THAN ENOUGH TO OVERWHELM THAT PROTECTION.
...EVEN AT A TWENTIETH OF THE SPEED...
IT IS CALCULATED TO ABSORB THE IMPACT OF A FIVE-OUNCE BULLET TRAVELING OVER THE SPEED OF SOUND.
BUT A FORCE 700 TIMES HEAVER...
CURSE YOUR LACK OF SKILL AND SMARTS, IF ANY-THING.
IT IS YOUR KARMA FOR BEING STUPID.
THE REASON YOU LOST WAS THAT YOU RELIED ON TECHNOLOGY TO DEFEND YOU.
SHIT... HOW WOULD I KNOW THAT?

WHAT!?
Rescue successful, Miss Haruka.

Normal logic doesn't apply to him!
BUT DON'T EXPOSE YOURSELF TO DANGER— THIS IS ZASHID TURUS!
ASHE-SAN, COVER EVERYONE AS THEY WITHDRAW!
GIRIRI (GRRK)
SO IT SEEMS...
I COULDN'T DO A THING AGAINST HIM.
DAMN MON-STER ...
SORRY... I NEED A MOMENT TO RECOVER...
Can you steer the bike, Dai?
Yes, Dai.
SO, IT CAN GO ON UNMANNED AUTOPILOT...
...

I'M GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT COLONEL!
DEFEATED BY [illegible] SAVED BY [illegible]
WELL... I WAS AN INTERESTING DIVERSION
TAKE YOUR UNIT AND REBUILD OUR DEFENSES
IF ANY OF MISAKI'S UNITS ARE AWAITING ORDERS USE THEM AS WELL
SOMETHING UNEXPECTED IS HAPPENING
7
11
11

BUT FIVE MINUTES HAVE PASSED. I WILL HAND OVER SECURITY...
...AND TAKE HARUKA TOOYAMA, AS THREATENED
パラララ
ダダダ

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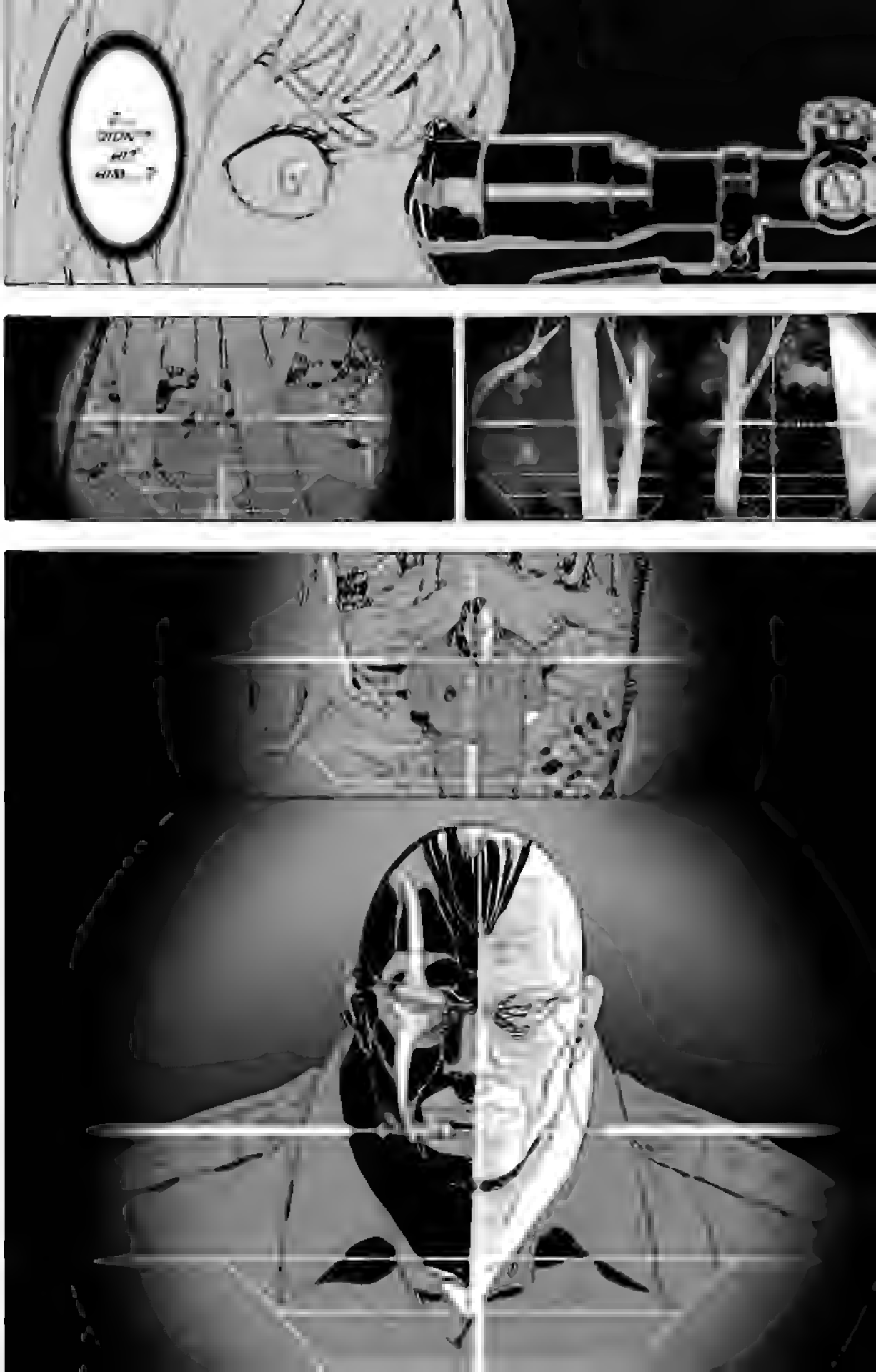
THEY'RE TOO GOOD
I'M GONNA BE CORNERED BEFORE LONG ..



10
!?

HURRY!!
WHERE DID HE GO!?
IT WAS THE PERFECT SHOT— NO WAY I COULD HAVE MISSED...
DAMN, THAT WAS MY CHANCE.
WHAT!?
THAT IS BECAUSE I READ YOU LIKE A BOOK.

HE HAD VISUAL ON ME WITH THE NAKED EYE FROM THAT DISTANCE?
IF THAT'S TRUE...
I JUST DODGED AN AMBUSH FROM A PERSON POSSESSING THE SKILLS TO HIT ME FROM AFAR...
MY EYE SIGHT IS BETTER THAN 20/...
ANY SNIPING WITHIN HALF A MILE...
MIGHT BE WELL BE A SIMPLE SHOOTOUT ME.

I CAN RUN THAT DISTANCE IN LESS THAN A MINUTE.
TARA (DRIP)
WHAT!? BUT I WAS AT LEAST A QUARTER OF A MILE AWAY!
YOUR UNDER-ESTIMATION OF YOUR FOE AND POOR CHOICE OF WEAPONRY...
...ARE THE CAUSES OF YOUR DEFEAT!
THE PRICE IS HEAVY FOR POINTING A GUN AT ME— EVEN FOR GIRLS.
YOUR BEST CHOICE FOR STOPPING ME WASN'T A BOLT ACTION RIFLE, BUT AN AUTOMATIC.
...
PURU
PURU (SHIVER)
AT THIS DISTANCE, YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY GET LUCKY AND HIT ME WITH ONE.

WHO GOES THERE?
YOU CANNOT DECEIVE MY EARS.
I DON'T MUCH LIKE YOU, ZASHID TURUS.
GASA
GASA GRUSTLE
YOU TALK ABOUT THE REASONS YOUR OPPONENTS LOSE, AND IN THE MOMENT THEY RESIGN THEMSELVES TO DEATH...
...YOU CONVINCE THEM TO REGRET THEIR CHOICES.
THAT'S PRETTY POOR TASTE.
JESUS...

NO WONDER MY SONS DID NOT APPEAR IN COMBAT.
YOU HAD ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF THEM.
AH. SO YOU ARE JESUS.
DODODODO (BOOOM)

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